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# *The* SOUTH ATLANTIC QUARTERLY

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JULY, 1936

Rural Yesterdays in the Upper South

Walter J. Matherly

A Painful Lesson in Silver Diplomacy

Jeannette P. Nichols

Bunin: Eclectic of the Future

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Reflections on the Southern Tradition

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Book Reviews

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# The South Atlantic Quarterly

Vol. XXXV

JULY, 1936

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## RURAL YESTERDAYS IN THE UPPER SOUTH

WALTER J. MATHERLY

THE FARM on which I was reared was located in the semi-highlands of the upper South. While my father was a native Southerner, he was unacquainted with plantation economy either in its ante-bellum or its post-bellum form. He was not a plantation owner; he as well as his father before him was a yeoman farmer. Plantations never existed in our section of the South. Of course, we had heard that in the states below us there were fine houses and large landholdings tilled by negro tenants and in an earlier period tilled by negro slaves, but we had never come in contact with them. The settlers in our area owned and operated their own holdings. While there were a few large farmers, they were widely scattered and were not plantation owners in the sense in which plantation owners were thought of in the lower South. Occasionally some of these large landowners were pointed out to us at the county fair or at some other gathering to which we went once in a while, but we looked at them askance; we regarded them as "big bugs"; they were a people apart—a people beyond our ken. We were simply small farmers—hard-working small farmers.

My father believed in early marriages and large families. He begat, before he was fifty years of age, seven sons and five daughters, and nine of these lived to beget sons and daughters of their own. Both he and my mother were young when they were married; he was nineteen and she was fifteen; but they had been able to get along some way from the very beginning. They had struggled, of course, and they had

undergone many hardships, but they had survived—vigorously survived; they at last owned their own farm and were blessed with plenty, as they phrased it, for the time and the locality in which they lived.

The farm was purchased by my father in the early eighties. He had paid for and greatly improved it by the end of the century. He had bought it in two different tracts. That part which was east of Glenn's Creek, where the house was located, had been purchased first; it cost five dollars per acre; it consisted of thirty-three acres. Later fifty acres were bought west of Glenn's Creek at a cost of six dollars an acre. Neither of the tracts was particularly fertile. Much of both was worn out by excessive cultivation and by erosion. But my father utilized the older boys not only to cultivate fertile spots but also to repair soil damages, to sow grass, to set out locust trees in gullies, and to improve the farm in general.

In the days of my father a large family was an asset rather than a liability. From the beginnings of colonization to the end of the World War, labor was scarce in America. There were three principal ways in which an adequate labor supply could be secured to exploit the resources of a new continent: first, by the purchase of slaves; second, by the immigration of free men and women; and, third, by the rearing of large families. While the plantations of the South used the first method and the industries of the North the second, the yeoman farmers of the South as well as the settlers of the West employed the third method; they produced their own labor supply; they reared large families. They found sons and daughters in large numbers profitable rather than unprofitable in clearing forests, in building homes, and in raising foodstuffs. Large rural families disappeared only when agriculture became commercialized and the machine began to supplant head and hand on the farm as well as in the factory.

The house in which we lived was a small five-room cottage. It was of wood, boxed and stripped rather than weatherboarded. The lumber to construct it had come from beech



logs cut from a native stand of timber near-by. The house had not had the touch of an architect nor the service of a contractor. It was designed and built during the early eighties by my father and my older brothers. My mother and my sisters had also contributed to its erection, especially in preparing meals for the men-folk while they toiled early and late with saw and hatchet. It was not a house at which a stranger would look a second time and yet it had a crude sort of beauty. It was a structure that was strong, sturdy, substantial; it bore unmistakably the marks of its builders.

The yard in which the house sat was medium in size and rectangular in shape; it was enclosed by a paling fence. There was a large locust tree to the right of the house, a tall cedar to the left and a catalpa of unusual size just to the left of the front porch. The yard was carpeted with blue grass and was planted with roses, lilacs, and many varieties of wild flowers. There were gates leading from the yard to the barn, to the spring-house, to the front lane, and to the vegetable garden immediately in the rear. A stile-block from which the women folk with their long riding skirts could mount their horses and adjust themselves to their sidesaddles occupied a prominent position near the front gate. A covered well within which rested an oaken bucket attached by chain to a windlass reared its bonnet-like head close to the backdoor. In one corner of the yard there was an ash hopper. Opposite the backdoor but projecting almost entirely into the garden was the smokehouse. Beyond the garden with a connecting path trellised with grape vines was the privy, the barn, and the barn lot.

Since our house consisted of five rooms and there was a large number of children, we were rather crowded. Our furniture was simple but sturdy. Sleeping was a problem. The most useful piece of furniture we possessed was a trundle bed. This was a bed which could during the day be rolled back under a regular bed. In it from three to five children were accustomed to sleep. We used to have a little rhyme which described it:

Two at the foot  
Two at the head  
One in the middle  
Makes five in the bed.

While we lived in congested quarters—I believe that is the way in which modern social experts would describe such conditions—we managed to get along, to be happy, to find life interesting.

The cultivation of the soil in the uplands of the South in the nineties was to a large extent self-sufficing in character. We were not compelled to buy our bread from grocery stores and bakeries; we wrested it by the sweat of our brows from the earth. We produced our own corn, shelled it by hand by the fireside, put it in two-bushel sacks, and took it in "turns" by horseback to mill. The mill was located about two miles from home. The miller converted the corn into meal or hominy and received in payment for his service a peck from each two-bushel sack. The meal was used to make mush or cornbread, both of which have always been famous in the South, and the hominy was cooked and served as a vegetable—in a way similar to that in which grits are cooked and served at the present time in the South.

We also produced our own wheat. While we did not grow wheat on a large scale, we grew it in sufficient amounts to furnish us with our own flour. The wheat was sown by hand in very much the same way that it was sown in the days of Ruth and Boaz; it was cut with a cradle, bound by hand into bundles, and placed in shocks to dry. After a time it was stacked and allowed to sweat for a while. Then a threshing outfit moved through the neighborhood, threshing the wheat of one farmer after another. The outfit consisted of a separator which removed the wheat from the straw, and an engine which provided the motor power. The separator as well as the engine was drawn from place to place by oxen. In later years the traction-engine came into use and oxen ceased to be necessary.

Prior to threshing it was necessary to set the separator

firmly between the stacks of wheat and to place the engine just as firmly a short distance therefrom. A large belt was attached to the fly wheel of the engine and connected with the separator. When these preparations were completed, the engine was started, the bundles of wheat were fed into the separator and the wheat detached from the straw. As the wheat came from the separator, it was put in sacks and the straw carefully stacked for the use of the live stock during the winter.

The sacks of wheat were hauled from the field and emptied into a garner for permanent storage. The garner was a part of the corn-crib—a small structure situated a short distance from the barn and erected on tin-covered posts extending three or four feet above the ground in order to keep out rats and mice. As the wheat was poured into the garner, leafy sassafras bushes were mixed with it to keep out weevils and other insects. On the left side of the garner door, a charcoal mark was made for each sack poured in. When the wheat was taken out to be converted into flour, a similar mark for each sack was made on the right side of the door. The difference between these two sets of marks gave us a perpetual inventory of the wheat in the garner. Even though we were unfamiliar with the intricacies of modern accounting, we at least recognized the value of continuing inventories.

We supplied our own vegetables; we did not secure them from boxes and bins in the market place; we grew them in our own garden. The garden occupied a central place in our scheme of living. Each spring we fertilized it with manure accumulated from the barn, carefully prepared it for planting, and looked after it with the utmost care during the growing season. We cultivated not only fresh vegetables for use in summer but also staple products for use in winter. When cabbage, potatoes, turnips, and other foodstuffs were harvested, they were stored. We did not store them, however, in warehouses; we never heard of warehouses; we stored them in the ground. We dug a large hole at some convenient spot in the garden, lined it with straw, placed the vegetables

therein, covered them with straw and then heaped up dirt over the mass until a large mound was created. This mound was then covered with boards set at an angle to drain off water, and topped with a box or an old dish-pan. In this way vegetables were kept dry and from freezing. When winter came, a hole was made in the side of the mound and the vegetables removed as they were consumed.

We also grew rather than purchased our fruits. Every farm with which I was acquainted as a boy had a small orchard. Apples, peaches, plums, and pears were grown in considerable quantities. Apples were buried in the same way in which we buried potatoes or turnips; they were also dried and canned. Peaches, plums, and pears were likewise preserved, dried, or canned. In addition to these fruits, we had access to blackberries, raspberries, and other types of small fruit which grew wild in the fields. These were picked and canned or made into jams. Wild grapes, black haws, persimmons, and nuts of various kinds were also plentiful and were used as sources of food supply.

We produced not only our own bread, fruits, and vegetables, but also our own meats. The packers meant nothing to us; we neither bought from them nor sold to them. We raised and butchered our own hogs. Likewise we occasionally butchered a lamb or a steer we had raised. We usually had three or four sows that littered pigs in late winter or early spring. While some of these sows as well as the pigs were sold directly, we always kept six or seven of the best from the litters for our meat. These were fattened with corn which we grew on the farm. They were ready for conversion into pork by the first frosts of winter.

Hog-killing was an event of unusual interest. Some of the neighbors came in to help us in performing this task. The process of hog-killing involved three or four separate stages. First, we built an outdoor fire on which we heated stones. When the stones were red-hot, we placed them in a large barrel of water which we set in the ground at an angle of forty-five degrees and which opened out onto a platform

of rough planks. Just as soon as the stones had heated the water to a boiling point, we killed the animal and placed its carcass in the barrel for scalding. When the scalding was completed, we removed the carcass to the platform and scraped off the hair. We then hung it up by its hind legs, gutted and washed it, and made it ready for the finishing. The finishing consisted of cutting up the carcass into various parts such as ham, shoulders, and sides, and salting them down in large boxes in the smokehouse.

When we killed hogs we always had a bountiful supply of miscellaneous meats. It was necessary to consume heart, liver, ribs, back-bone, trimmings, and other parts of the hog as early as possible since it was difficult to salt them down and to keep them without refrigeration over very long periods of time. Fats were immediately rendered into lard. This was done by boiling them in a large kettle in the backyard. Bits of meat and skin were skimmed off and were called "cracklings." Cracklings were used to make crackling bread or were put in a large jar and kept for purposes of making soap.

After the meat had been salted down for a few weeks, it was taken from the boxes; the salt was washed off; and the meat was suspended from the joists of the smokehouse. Then we proceeded to smoke it. We did this by the use of a smouldering fire. The fire was maintained by night as well as by day; it was continued for a period of a week or so. When the curing of hams, shoulders, and middlings was finally accomplished, they were encased in white cotton sacks resembling pillow cases and left suspended from the joists for future consumption.

In the rural yesterdays we did not buy soap; we made it. Soap-making began with the crackling jar—a very serviceable device in our household economy. During the winter, scraps of meat and grease were saved and added to the cracklings already accumulated from the rendering of lard. Just about the time the dogwoods began to bloom, we started preparations for using the contents of the jar to make soap.

Soap-making required lye—a product of the ash hopper. The ash hopper was a V-shaped container, about five feet high, erected in the backyard with its lowest end resting in a trough. Wood ashes from the fireplace and kitchen stove were emptied into this hopper. The best ashes from which to secure lye were hickory and ash. When we were ready to make soap, we poured water into the ash hopper at the top; it penetrated down through the ashes and converged as lye at the bottom of the trough. It was then run off into an earthen jar and poured into a large outdoor kettle near-by. Cracklings, meat scraps, and greases of various kinds were dumped into the kettle. The mixture was boiled for some hours and the refuse removed with a skimmer. The residue was semi-liquid brown soap—lye soap.

We had little or no acquaintanceship with manufactured soap. I was personally introduced to factory-made soap at the beginning of the present century. Lye soap was used for washing face and hands as well as clothes. It was certainly a vigorous soap; it lathered profusely, especially when used in rainwater; it removed the dirt; it made things clean. Even though it did not float or appear in attractive forms, it performed its functions effectively and in doing so, it almost took off the skin as well as the dirt attached thereto.

While we knew nothing about dairying as an industry, we provided ourselves with milk and butter. We kept two or three milk cows—good milk cows. Good farmers in our section always kept good milk cows. My father always argued that the character of a man could be determined by the kind of cows he kept. While he knew little about calories and vitamins, he understood the food values of milk and butter. Every day we had plenty of each. We drank milk in large quantities and spread butter on our bread thickly even before advertising slogans concerning butter became popular.

We solved in a very simple manner the problem of cooling and preserving milk and butter as well as other articles of food. About fifty yards from our house there was a spring. This spring was walled up with rocks and covered with a



roof of rough boards; it was carefully cleaned periodically, and space was provided therein for any commodities requiring refrigeration. The spring originally determined the location of the house just as springs determined the locations of all earlier farmhouses in America. Every morning before I went to school it was my job to take the milk and butter to the spring. It was also my task to bring them back at night. If a heavy rainstorm happened to come up quickly during the day and my mother was unable to reach the spring in time, the spring overflowed and everything within it was destroyed. The spring was used merely as a cold storage plant; it did not supply our drinking water. This we secured from a deep well nearer the house.

Live stock other than hogs and cows were indispensable to the agrarian system under which we lived. We had two or three mares which we used to raise mules to operate our farm, and to provide means of transportation and communication. We also raised a few sheep. We obtained from them three kinds of products: wool, which we had carded at a carding mill not far away and which we spun and knitted into socks and other garments; lambs, which we sold to local buyers for cash; and occasionally mutton.

We engaged in poultry production to a limited extent. We not only raised chickens and geese but also turkeys. Turkeys were not common family property; they belonged directly to the women of the household; they usually supplied my mother and sisters with funds with which to purchase their fall clothes. Eggs likewise supplied funds with which to purchase clothes and other goods, but they were utilized primarily as foodstuffs. Unlike turkeys they were common property and were available to all members of the family.

We provided ourselves with our own sweets. We did not depend upon sugar refineries for either brown or white sugar. While occasionally we had the first and, when company came, the second, we turned to molasses primarily for sweetening purposes. We grew each year a patch of sorghum. In the fall we made it into molasses. We stripped off the blades,

cut off the tops, and hauled the stalks to the sorghum mill. A sorghum mill consisted of two pieces of equipment, a compressing machine and a molasses box. The former was used to compress the juice from the stalk, and the latter to reduce the juice to syrup. The box was placed over a furnace dug in the ground. A fire was built under it and the juice was boiled into molasses. As the boiling progressed we had to stir the contents frequently and to skim off the scum. When the molasses began to get thick and the bubbles created by reduced boiling began to pop placidly, my father used to say: "The molasses are about done; the old woman is beginning to smoke her pipe." The molasses so produced were used not only to spread on hot biscuits and other kinds of bread but also to make candy, sweet cakes, desserts and jams and to sweeten hot and cold drinks of various kinds.

Tea and coffee were considered great luxuries by my parents; they were little consumed in our household. My father thought it was wrong to drink coffee. He was even doubtful about tea. I never learned to drink either of them until after I was grown. We had hot drinks, but they were made from raw materials close at hand. Sassafras was the pre-eminent raw material to which we had access. In the spring we dug up its roots and utilized them in making tea. Sassafras tea was a good hot drink; it was also considered good medicine since my father in common with the residents of sassafras-producing areas almost everywhere believed that it purified sluggish blood after a cold winter. We likewise made use of sage and horehound in preparing hot teas for bad colds.

In the sub-region of the South in which we resided we engaged in trade to a limited extent. While we subsisted largely on what we ourselves produced, we created several surplus commodities of one kind or another. We sold these for cash or exchanged them directly for other commodities. While we worked out our poll taxes on public roads, we acquired from the sale of butter and eggs, of poultry, and of live stock sufficient funds to pay the small amount of other

taxes which were levied upon us, to buy clothes, to secure goods imported from outside the community, or otherwise to improve our standards of living. Much of our trade was the merest barter. The early merchants did not pay cash for what we took to them; they gave us due bills which we had to trade out—that is, we had to buy goods in their stores in return. This applied not only to the things we grew directly on the farm but also to rabbits, hides, and other articles which we accumulated from hunting and trapping.

The farm we owned was split up into small fields. Fencing was an important farming function we had to face. Two principal types of materials were used—wood and rock. Since most of our land was not only underlain but also covered with limestone, rock was used in building fences. I learned at an early age to build a rock fence. I suspect that there are certain rock fences still standing which I helped to construct more than thirty years ago. The rocks had to be cleared from the soil in order to till it properly, and it was easier to build them into fences than to cart them away.

We also constructed rail fences—the “worm” or stake-and-ridered kind as well as the kind that was attached to posts. We used the same types of rails that Abraham Lincoln in his early years split. Oak and poplar were the two chief sources of lumber upon which we relied for our supply of rails. In the nineties we began to construct paling fences. These fences were made of slats woven into double wires which were stapled at top and bottom to locust posts set deep in the ground at intervals of ten feet. Wire fences appeared in our locality at the beginning of the first decade of the present century.

The farm implements we employed were of the simple variety. Harvesting machines, gang plows, tractors and so on were unknown to us. The land we cultivated was too hilly and rocky for modern farm machinery anyway. We used the cradle to harvest wheat, the scythe to cut the hay, the ax to cut wood, and the grubbing-hoe to clear new ground. The mowing-machine was not entirely alien to us, but its use was limited to the leveler and smoother fields. We had single- and

double-shovel cultivating plows, single and hillside breaking plows, hand corn planters, wooden drags, sleds, cross-cut saws, and wagons. We also had other types of hand instruments. Indeed, the mechanical devices which we had at our command were tools altogether rather than machines. The mechanization of agriculture had not appeared to trouble us with matters of equipment loans, bank borrowings, and capital investments.

Farmers like my father were not concerned with problems of over-production, processing taxes or with alphabetic government organizations for agricultural relief. They did not produce for the market; they produced for home use; they thought not in terms of market values but in terms of use values. The few products which they sold in the market place represented local surpluses; when they engaged in selling, they engaged in selling, not in national and international markets, but in local markets. Farmers, as I knew them in the hills of the South, were not concerned to any appreciable extent with commercial agriculture; depressions could come and depressions could go, but they did not worry, go hungry or cry for public aid. They fared ill only when nature failed them or when they failed to exercise due diligence or due foresight.

The sum total of things to which my parents attached value were the farm itself, the church, the school, and the home. The church was basic in our conceptions of life. Everybody almost went to Sunday-school and church. We lived three miles out from a rural village. There were four churches in that village. While each church had preaching every other Sunday, all of them had Sunday-school every Sunday. Denominational battles both in season and out were fought with the utmost vigor. This was particularly true during big meetings or revivals. Those who did not attend either church or Sunday-school were unbelievers, infidels, sinners; they were lost, outside the fold, damned. Everybody felt sorry for them, for to be eternally damned was a serious matter.

The school was likewise basic in our scheme of things.

We regarded ignorance as a blight; education as a blessing. We wanted to know, to learn, to acquire understanding. While we did not have compulsory school attendance, every one went to school for a sufficient length of time to secure something more than the minimum essentials of reading, writing, and ciphering.

The school to which my brothers and sisters as well as myself went was a country not a village school. It was located about three miles from home; it was a one-room structure; it had forty or fifty pupils ranging in age from six to twenty-six; it opened the first Monday in July and closed at Christmas. There was no gradation of classes. We dressed in plain but adequate school clothes. We did not wear shoes until almost Christmas. Often on our way to school on a frosty morning we would scare up cows in the pasture in order to warm our toes. But even in spite of these shortcomings, we learned something; we somehow broke through the barriers of ignorance and effected at least a toe-hold on a few things of lasting value.

The home was the center of our system of culture. Everything we did revolved around the fireside. What we thought, felt, and aspired to was brought to the family circle for consideration. The finest of our family contacts were made after supper before blazing logs in a wide stone fireplace. There we popped corn, told stories, played games, listened to experiences old and new. My father enjoyed these activities; they were sacred to him. He believed in a home that was essentially religious—essentially Christian. He not only insisted on saying grace at the table but also on maintaining family prayers. Family prayers ended the day—every day. All members of the family were expected to be present at these prayers. Since we were a large family, they took on some of the aspects of a church service.

Even though we did not have standards of living similar to those who live on the farm today, we were content in a simple way. We not only sought to supply our survival needs but also to satisfy our higher wants. We believed whole-

heartedly in the philosophy of *Poor Richard's Almanac*. We accepted the basic virtues—the basic Christian virtues—as infallible guides to personal conduct. While my parents were rigorous in their moral attitudes, they permitted us to enjoy ourselves, to live as healthy normal children, to acquire to a large extent our own modes of action. Strength of character dominated their entire thinking; it was the goal of all of their parental strivings. My father used to boast: "These hills produce not only crops and live stock but also men and women."

The farm upon which my father and mother lived meant something to them. It was not a mere plot of ground; it was a home, an earthly residence, a permanent abiding place. They were a part of the soil; the soil was a part of them. They had respect for what nature had done as well as for what they had done. While they were earth-bound, they were not slaves—neither economic slaves nor slaves of nature; they were free—free legally, free economically, free spiritually. They could come and go, work and play, worship and wander as the spirit moved them. They did not have an automobile, a telephone, or a radio; they did not have a modern house in which to live; they did not journey into distant lands; but they were content; they possessed the earth and the fullness thereof.



## A PAINFUL LESSON IN SILVER DIPLOMACY

JEANNETTE P. NICHOLS

A paradox? A paradox,  
A most ingenious paradox!  
We've quips and quibbles heard in flocks,  
But none to beat this paradox!

*The Pirates of Penzance, Act II.*

THE United States today needs another gifted pair like Gilbert and Sullivan, for none less could do justice to the latest American paradox in time of depression. The nation of the greatest wealth has had the worst unemployment. The country with the largest store of gold has had the strongest movement for silver. The United States Government, with over ten and a quarter billions in gold [official figures of the Treasury, May 8, 1936] keeps gold out of circulation while selling it abroad (for silver, as commanded by the latest purchase law) as the only means of getting rid of it! This would be hard, indeed, for Arthur, Harrison, or Cleveland to understand; they never were compelled to dissuade other nations from sending gold westward. Theirs were not presidential terms which witnessed an increase of fully sixty per cent in the world's gold output—an increase of one hundred and fifty per cent in terms of a re-valued United States dollar. They knew the fear of gold scarcity, not the danger of an overabundance. When silver badgered them, the trade position of the United States was relatively weak, gold fled our shores nervously, and the Treasury had to struggle to keep the dollar up, rather than fight to keep it down.

Nevertheless, the political arguments of silver lawmakers have remained much the same through the half century. Silver speeches in the *Congressional Record* of 1935-36 employ the phrases useful in earlier depressions—in 1878, 1885, and 1893; perhaps with added emphasis, for the price of wheat latterly has reached the lowest point recorded in four hundred

years [Annual Report of World Bank, quoted by *The New York Times*, May 12, 1936]. Hence, political exigencies again force on an Administration laws having the avowed intent of raising the world-price of silver and of increasing its monetary use; and those laws again fail of their proclaimed objectives while they effectively subsidize the domestic silver producer, albeit by a differential (thirty-two cents above a world price of approximately forty-five cents) new in history.

The sending of confidential silver missions across the sea began definitively in 1879, and continues in 1936—with vital distinctions. Most of the gentlemen travel now in an opposite direction, for America's net gold import of \$1,739,000,000 was an outstanding fact of 1935, a situation scarcely imagined half a century earlier. Foreign governments then were not sending their busy premiers to determine our monetary pleasure and take a cup of tea at the White House. American developments were not disrupting ancient silver systems in China and Mexico. It was we who had to send our agents to the capitals of Europe. There they practiced what patience they could, as they cooled their heels in the outer rooms of chancelleries, begged (sometimes in vain) the boon of an interview with a chancellor, and gratefully accepted a dinner invitation. In short, no more vivid contrast to the 1936 spring version of silver diplomacy, wherein Ambassador Sze and Mr. Chen of China wait on Secretary Morgenthau at Washington, could be afforded than the mission of the earnest Mr. Edward Atkinson in 1887.

The sad fate of the London Economic Conference of the summer of 1933, and the abortive character of the Carnegie Foundation Conference in the same city in the spring of 1935, are illustrations of the fact that from the beginning of recorded history periods of economic depression have fostered agitation for currency expansion. In the modern period, very frequently since 1860, executives in representative governments have had to adjust the course of the ship of state to stormy inflation weather. In the United States the development of Nevada's Comstock lode (early in the seventies) gave

to cheap money agitation a special character, as uniting the purposeful forces of producer interests to the less co-ordinated efforts of politicians with debtor constituencies, and giving inflation a silver connotation.

In dealing with the demand for currency expansion through silver coinage, various presidents have sometimes endeavored to deflect the agitation into foreign channels through confidential diplomatic agencies. These efforts have usually been checkmated by two inexorable facts: (1) that Europe produced too little silver for that metal to enjoy great political importance there, and (2) that the United States House or Senate gave the lie to diplomatic assertions that the Congress would not legislate for silver. The experience of a public-spirited Democrat sent abroad by Cleveland nearly fifty years ago in quest of an international monetary agreement capitably demonstrates many of the major difficulties inherent in solving this perennial question.

I

In March, 1887, the Democratic party was in power in the United States, but it was not happy in that power. The nation had been suffering the discomforts of a minor depression since 1885, and the party was split by the same class and sectional animosities which were dividing the people—on whether tariff walls should be lowered, railroad rates be restricted, and the currency inflated by free coinage of silver. Nor could "the cohesive power of public plunder" bind together the Democrats, for, when President Cleveland vetoed the dependent pension bill, he convinced the Democracy that there was no balm in Gilead.

Democratic misery gave comfort to the enemy, for the Republicans enjoyed such unity as blesses whatever party is out of power and free from responsibility. They were exerting rather more influence upon railroad legislation, through the interstate commerce bill, than they could have exerted under a united administration. These facts were none too pleasing to certain Democrats. Secretary of the Treasury Manning frankly revealed the situation to his friend Sidney

Webster, the New York corporation lawyer: "Almost everybody seems to be unpleasantly disturbed and in a fret . . . saying how glad he will be when Congress shall adjourn. Then, the air may be clearer, and everybody feeling better."

Responsible gentlemen sitting around the cabinet table realized, however, that there would be another meeting of Congress in December, and they wracked their brains for means of uniting their party before that pre-election session should begin. Could the silver issue, for example, be relegated to the rear? Since Queen Victoria (September 20, 1886) had appointed a Royal Commission "to inquire into the Recent Changes in the Relative Value of the Precious Metals," Cleveland and Bayard wondered whether England (then firmly wedded to the gold standard) might not treat another emissary for bimetallism more cordially than she had treated earlier ones. The silver producers and debtor elements of the United States might overturn the Democratic appellation if they obtained enough popular support for *unlimited* free coinage. The Bland-Allison Law, in effect since 1878, had restricted silver purchases, in actual practice, to \$2,000,000 monthly; and the Administration did not relish a larger investment in the depreciating metal. These gentlemen knew that there remained, unspent from former appropriations, a fund designated by Congress for use in monetary negotiations. Might it not be good policy to dip once again into that fund?

Their thoughts were directed toward a very interesting and prominent citizen of Boston, one Edward Atkinson, whom Fate was conspiring to make the next confidential agent. Unlike earlier monetary ambassadors, he was not a bimetallist; and he abjured subtle and involved diction, for a frank simplicity of approach. He was about sixty, but retained the enthusiasm, faith, and naïveté of youth. In this one personality were bound up textile manufacturer, dietician, inventor, fire insurance executive, upbuilder of the South, pamphleteer and reformer, all functioning at one and the same time with the reformer foremost. He can best be understood by his own comment on himself: "I wish I had a sufficient fortune

to enable me to devote myself wholly to public questions. The more I study them, the more I perceive the need of good work and feel capable of doing it."

Familiar in Republican councils prior to 1884, he had turned Democrat with the Cleveland candidacy. Being both a "sound money" man and a raw-material free trader, he had had his unhappy moments when loyalty to the Republican party and disapprobation from New England protected interests had forced him to soft-pedal tariff reform. Or, again, the issue was so joined that sound money and protection were arrayed against low tariffs and free silver or expansion of greenbacks; then Atkinson "had no hesitancy in relegating the tariff to a secondary position." The Democratic party seemed to promise an end to his internal warfare.

Early in 1887 Atkinson was devoting much of his thought to the welfare of his newly adopted party. It was a labor of love, since the Democracy seemed to him a likely instrument for realizing two of his cherished reforms. That winter he had the pleasure of welcoming to the United States none other than Sir Thomas Farrer, prominent spokesman for the British monometallic group. Farrer delighted Atkinson and his crony, David A. Wells, with similarities between his views and theirs.

It seemed to them that the evils of which bimetallists, laborers, and debtors complained were not due (as claimed) to a scarcity of gold, and therefore such evils did not require more recognition for silver. A neat line of reasoning was worked out to fit their opinions. Instead of being scarce, gold was so abundant it had depreciated with silver. Since silver still served as subsidiary coinage in countries where it had lost legal tender, it was not, in reality, demonetized. "Currency quackeries" were diverting attention "from matters of real importance." This silver issue would fall into the background where it belonged if people would only be patient and try to understand what economic factors actually were at work.

As Atkinson summed it up, in the United States and

England certain things probably were true: the depression in trade had not been accompanied by a depression in industry, wages had not fallen with prices, modern science and invention (especially improved distribution) had so greatly reduced prices, while immensely increasing the demand for goods, as to divert from capitalists to wage earners an increasing share of the produce of industry; hence, the falling prices were beneficial to the great body of consumers, in America and Britain. If on the continent of Europe the condition of the working class had become worse, it was due to accumulating burdens of armament for wars past and future, not to silver demonetization. In the circumstances, the United States could afford to await events, stopping, if possible, coinage of the Bland dollars until silver found its true level.

## II

When the baronet departed, Atkinson was dreaming of applying his monetary views to government policy, in such manner as to bestow upon his native land (he was intensely patriotic) the twin blessings of a stable currency and an abounding prosperity. To this end he went to Washington, where his tall, impressive figure and full white beard were familiar, and sought to plead his cause before the seats of the mighty. He was in many respects a man of childlike faith, but he was also tremendously in earnest and obviously honest. He talked with Cleveland and made a decided impression upon Secretary of State Bayard, who was much relieved, as he informed Atkinson, to hear words of hope on the silver problem.

Atkinson saw the salvation of silver in the railroads—as fast as they penetrated Asia, Africa, and South America they would increase commercial possibilities there and create a corresponding rise in the demand for money. As those peoples were “too poor to make use of gold” and “too unintelligent to adopt civilized methods of banking whereby the use of coin may be economized,” they must use silver—silver in largely increased quantities—enough to raise its price, if



only Atkinson's proposition were adopted. The stock of bullion held by the United States should be taken off the market by substituting silver certificates for the Bland dollars, thus forcing growing commerce to depend chiefly upon the annual product, which Atkinson estimated at but one-half per cent of the existing stock in use.

Would not expanding trade absorb the annual silver output, Atkinson asked Bayard, "provided any assurance were given as to what would be the future conduct of the nations of Europe and of the United States in respect to the matter"? Whether that assurance might be an attempt to bring about a double legal tender by international agreement, or an adherence to the gold standard as the single principle tender, did not matter, Atkinson felt: "What is needed is a decision one way or the other." Simply give transportation improvements time to restore silver to its rightful heritage; and accelerate the process by removing the duty from raw materials imported from backward nations, so as to increase the export of silver to them.

The picture was one to fire the imagination, and it stirred the patriotic Atkinson deeply. He assured Bayard, "I have the most profound conviction that at the highest wages paid in the world, and at the lowest cost of product owing to the freedom of labor from the obstructive tax of war and preparation for war, this country would instantly become the controlling member of the commercial and manufacturing states." Seen from this angle silver was not fearsome; the problem of disposing of the supply might disappear from politics soon, certainly sooner if Congress lowered the tariff bars. To lower them, Western men would gladly vote with Southerners and with the more enlightened members from the East—so Atkinson thought.

Whether or not Bayard's long experience in Congress permitted him to reduce the political equation to such simple terms, the Bostonian seemed to him a useful person. He suggested as much to Cleveland, and the two decided to give Atkinson three months abroad, in which to present his theory

to foreign statesmen. If he could impress them with its validity, they might deign to agree to an international ratio. What Bayard actually wrote Atkinson, on March 11, however, was that he was "to investigate the present status of Bimetallicism, and then ascertain and indicate, if possible, what action could be taken by the Government of the United States to strengthen its cause."

Bayard's letter reached Atkinson in Bermuda, whither he had gone accompanied by Mrs. Atkinson, on March 11, without thought of a possible European mission.

### III

Being an untrained diplomat, Atkinson was addicted to direct language; and when he replied to Bayard, March 29, from Boston, he made some attempt to reduce the Secretary of State to specific terms. He restated his views on the rosy prospects for silver which, as he remarked, had caused this mission to be proposed to him; but he added a frank statement showing he had guessed how the Administration wished to use him: "I do not myself believe that any international agreement can be made. My conviction from correspondence, and especially from my conversation with Sir Thomas Farrer, Member of the English Silver Commission who was lately in this country, lead me to the belief that any international bimetallic agreement, or any attempt to establish a double legal tender by such an agreement, is hopeless if it be desirable. It is not therefore necessary for me to enter upon the question whether it would be desirable or not, if practicable."

Atkinson's letter reached Bayard two days later. That same day he read it to Cleveland and Manning at the cabinet meeting, and it left them no less determined to employ Atkinson. Very likely they felt it would be an advantage to keep this mission out of the hands of bimetallic enthusiasts. At any rate, that evening Bayard made reply in complimentary terms. The President deemed it his duty to obtain, for the benefit of the American people, "the most intelligent and authoritative opinions" upon the present and future status of

gold and silver, with a view to retaining both as legal tender; Atkinson was believed to be a person who could gather such opinions, and his "impressive suggestions" on the probable increased use of silver might "be used with important effect" in shaping international opinion toward agreement on a ratio. Incidentally, Atkinson whose salary was only \$10,000 annually, was to have monthly pay of \$1,000 and travel allowance of \$500.

Atkinson would have been more than human if he had not taken Bayard's bait. It was arranged that Bayard should await until April 27 the consent of the Board of Directors of the Boston Manufacturers Mutual Fire Insurance Company to the absence of their president and treasurer for four months, and that Atkinson would discreetly conduct his investigations by private interviews rather than "through public announcement." As the Secretary of State tactfully explained, "European statesmen might shrink from views which were advertised in advance." The emissary may have regretted that he could not confide the precise and important nature of this summer's journey to his more intimate correspondents; but he kept the faith and went happily about his plans, looking forward to visits abroad with such friends as Andrew Carnegie and Sir Thomas Farrer.

The first week of May was the time set for him to come to Washington for that quiet conversational interchange (usually unrecorded) which powerfully affects diplomatic behavior without greatly enlightening the historian on the reasons therefor. The project evidently was not clarified by the conference, partly, perhaps, because of the action of Queen Victoria. On May 6, she announced a readjustment of the membership of the Royal Silver Commission, first selected the previous September. Her action encouraged speculation over England's attitude, and Bayard that day reminded Atkinson of what Cleveland wanted and what Atkinson was to do. The President felt it to be his duty "to relax no effort" looking toward "a fixed international ratio" which should "permit the free coinage of gold and silver alike." Therefore

Atkinson, by conferences with statesmen and business men, would carefully ascertain "what practicability exists" for the establishment of such ratio.

The budding diplomat proceeded to send the Secretary of State a written statement of what he understood to be his function. He repeated his theories regarding wages, prices, and armaments which he described as "certain lines to be taken up before the principal issue can be determined." This program consumed more than half his letter. He added thereto a statement as to the position of the United States on silver to be presented to European statesmen and financiers, which showed that he was expected to prove a lineal descendant of earlier confidential agents.

He understood he was to inform Europe that the United States, while desiring to find means for the joint use of silver and gold as money, had no favors to ask—merely desired to know what conclusions other nations may have reached as to an international agreement. The United States for its part was confident that it could afford to wait, if need be, even possibly suspending silver coinage during the interim. Atkinson's peculiar contribution to these familiar diplomatic doctrines was his thesis that rail penetration of silver-using countries would create a market for American silver—that the United States for this reason was in a truly independent position.

Bayard wished Atkinson a pleasant voyage, advancing \$1,500 toward it, and the confidential agent set sail for England accompanied by part of his family. Before his departure, however, he in all honesty sent Bayard final warning that his mission must fail, quoting extracts from a letter written by William Fowler, ex-member of Parliament for Cambridge. Fowler indicated that busy British manufacturers agreed with Atkinson on wages and prices, and that Cleveland and Bayard were mistaken in supposing bimetallism was gaining in England. Not an idle loom could Fowler find in all Lancashire! "Mr. Fowler," wrote Atkinson, "is one of the men with whom I expect to put myself in close communication as soon as I

reach London." With the bimetallists, naturally, Atkinson never placed himself fully *en rapport*. Possibly Cleveland thought that was just as well.

IV

The visit in London of this confidential agent was better timed than those of his predecessors. The "season" was on and Parliament kept its members available, so that Atkinson, who lacked nothing of industry, was kept busy seeing important people. To them he was introduced with true British courtesy. Lord Herschell, late Lord Chancellor and now Chairman of the Silver Commission, arranged a dinner for Atkinson to meet Lord Granville and others. Gladstone had a garden party at Dollis Hill. Sir John Lubbock, also one of the so-called Herschell Commission, on July 8 gave a breakfast to Atkinson "with several members of the Silver Commission, representing both sides" present. By these contacts, besides others he made himself, the agent of the United States found most of his prior opinions confirmed. In a very real sense, they were to him the sum and substance of his mission.

From these sources, Atkinson learned that the Silver Commission, from which Cleveland and Bayard had hoped so much, was not going to report in time for the next meeting of the United States Congress; and when it did report, at least two, and probably three, differences of opinion would be exposed to public gaze. This inconclusive result would be due to the fact that silver was not of interest to the public or the politicians—Ireland held the stage in and out of Parliament except in quarters affected by the India trade. In other words, the Commission was but "a mere tub to the whale," devised to content jealous bimetallists who were writing letters and articles but only beginning to get a hearing. The Commission did not signify that there was any immediate likelihood of silver legislation by Britain.

However, Atkinson's conferees admitted that the condition of the British farmer was bad and that of the landlord desperate. A further decline in prices and in the situation of

these classes might create the impression that the currency issue was to be "of primary political importance" in Britain. Still, land and agriculture were relatively unimportant as compared with manufacturers and commerce, so that on this issue the agriculturalists were sure to be defeated by the commercial men. Hence, British co-operation in any international legislation for silver was very far distant.

Having thus disposed, somewhat summarily, of Atkinson's chief inquiry, the British statesmen and financiers turned wholeheartedly to asking him for answers to their own questions. The gentlemen of the "City" (that term which embraces in one short word the locale and membership of the dominant British bankers) were intensely interested in the position of the United States Treasury and its prospective influence upon the money market. They posed searching questions as to government policy and profits of silver mines. They were unanimous in the judgment that continued coinage of Bland dollars depressed the price and was "bad in every respect." Was there danger of a flood of silver from the United States?

Atkinson responded that he personally thought the flood would not materialize; but he was too honest to give it as anything more than his own opinion. He told Herschell, Gladstone, and others that he would undertake to furnish them with the considered opinions of United States experts on silver and politics. As good as his word, he suggested to Bayard that the State Department collect the testimony, not only from certain geologists whom he listed but from such key figures in Democratic and silver politics as ex-Senator N. P. Hill of Colorado, Senator J. P. Jones of Nevada, and General Warner of the Bimetallic League. He asked Bayard whether members of Congress from the silver states could not be enticed into abandoning the Bland dollar if silver certificates were substituted for greenbacks. Would they not vote for taking the duty off raw materials from silver-producing countries? Atkinson enclosed questionnaires to be used for these worthy purposes, and on his own initiative cir-



culated others (in printed form) among United States consuls and foreign friends.

The American's eagerness to answer questions led the Englishmen to ask more, and the rôle of official informant seemed very pleasant for a time. The envoy wrote the Secretary: "I am personally enjoying my intercourse with leading men and I am very sure that I have made a strong impression upon them. . . . My interviews with the members of the Silver Commission will surely broaden the scope of their work and make it less insular and John Bullish." But he was as sincere as he was lacking in diplomatic finesse: he confessed to "some misgiving," especially as he was not hearing from Bayard.

He sought to reassure himself at the breakfast given by Sir John Lubbock, to whom he revealed that his conscience was pricking him. He had been commissioned, he explained, "to see if the United States while not asking any favor of other nations, could not co-operate with them in restoring silver to its former use"; but he had only been able to discover that there was no "consensus of opinion," that the Commission members themselves were still "seeking a basis of facts" on which to proceed.

This pathetic lament was repeated to the entire table, and one of the guests gravely replied for the group, "You need charge yourself with no lack of diligence . . . there is as yet no body of men and no representative of common agreement with whom you could propose to co-operate in any practical manner and if you can succeed in developing the facts as to the present or prospective product of silver bullion so that the conclusions given may be accepted, you will have contributed an essential element to the final decision."

V

The outlook for silver seemed to grow darker the longer Atkinson remained in London. At first he had understood the Chancellor of the Exchequer to be attracted to a proposition for equalizing the weight of silver in the quarter dollar,

shilling, mark, and franc; but at their final conference Goschen termed even this scheme hopeless, and explicitly confirmed Atkinson's reiterated impression that there was in England no wish to act.

Nevertheless, Atkinson made an attempt at diplomacy. He tried to persuade the Chancellor that London would suffer for her non-coöperation, because the United States would draw off foreign gold to maintain silver at a parity. Goschen countered, "How is that to happen?" Atkinson said that it would happen through her great harvests which make her a creditor nation and which Europe with her short food supply must buy. Goschen, "evidently very much impressed," turned to the question of Congress and what it would accept. Congress—the perennial nemesis of diplomats! But Atkinson replied in the best tradition of the guild, "The legal unit of value—a dollar made of gold will be maintained. As soon as the danger of coming to the standard of the silver dollar—if it remains depreciated—becomes apparent the solid sense of the country will come up as it always has in any emergency and will either compel Congress to act if in session or support the Administration without legislation, in maintaining our whole currency at par in gold. It can be done and it will be done."

For this stiffening of attitude contacts with the bimetallists were partly responsible. Sir Hucks Gibbs, Lord Grenfell, Sir Louis Mallet, and Samuel Smith, M. P. for Liverpool, proved important to Atkinson. He thought Mallet one of "the two thoroughly trained economists" of the Silver Commission, Farrer being the other—and Samuel Smith "the most able representative of bimetallism in Parliament." The bimetallists were reduced to the necessity of urging a bimetallic agreement without British co-operation, but they might be attracting more attention and making greater speed than the monometallists admitted. It occurred to Atkinson that falling prices and railroad changes might be less beneficent in Britain than at home.

Upon the whole, Atkinson's observations in England sealed his conviction of the ultimate supremacy of the United

States: "I wonder sometimes that there is not a sense of animosity excited when I see fields deserted and hear of families and even districts ruined by our competition and when even the Iron Masters tremble when they read of the Alabama developments and the natural gas. . . . Whether we will or not—tariff or no tariff—our action has become a political factor in every material problem." Yet America need not assume that England soon would protect herself, for no less an authority than John Bright confidently prophesied to Atkinson, "when you restore slavery you may expect us to restore protection and not before."

In pleasant mood Atkinson left England for the continent, happily unaware that straws were blowing in a contrary wind. Wells was on the point of disclosing political obstacles: "A western man said to me in New York last week, 'It is no use to send anything more in the way of financial argument on tariff or silver to the West from New England. You and Atkinson print first rate but you don't seem to have any influence at home. We'll take care of this tariff question in time; and we won't ask or care what New England wants.'"

## VI

What followed after Atkinson left London was in the nature of a postscript and a rewritten one at that. Consultants in Paris, July 16-31, immediately told him, "Nothing can be done without Germany and . . . probably Germany will not act without Great Britain." Cernuschi, the renowned French bimetallist, said, "It would be useless to try to make any move elsewhere." This instant frankness did not surprise the confidential agent, but it turned his thoughts back toward home and the defense of his mission, at Washington. He decided that he, as an economist, should be more of a politician. He explained it all to Farrer, "I have concluded that it is my duty to keep my own convictions in the background and to present the so-called bimetallic theory in the strongest terms consistent with my own processes of reasoning." He must salvage all he could.

So he bolstered his foreign interviews with more stress upon a bimetallic treaty as being to Europe's interest—warning Frenchmen that the United States had such a large surplus she might pay her bonds, thus withdrawing bank notes from circulation, and might substitute for them gold from Europe's supply. Statistics came to his aid, he surprised himself with the extent to which they could corroborate his theory of a rise in the price of silver, and on this he based a renewed argument for reduction of the tariff on raw materials at home. If Europe did not co-operate, and if Congress refused to abandon the Bland dollar (and Atkinson was enough of a realist to admit these probabilities to Bayard), the only road to sound finance in the United States lay through tariff reform. Therefore, he urged the Administration to arrange the deal between Senators from New England and those from California, Colorado, and Nevada, whereby the Eastern group would vote to substitute silver for legal tender paper while the Westerners voted to take the duty off certain raw materials, and the two together thus created new outlets for silver at home and abroad.

After thinking over all the conferences he had had in London and Paris, Atkinson wrote out a defensive document, to be printed as soon as he reached Berlin. He had a double object. To United States Minister George H. Pendleton at Berlin he explained that even the silver men must see plainly that he, hitherto counted against them, had presented their cause to Europe impartially: "I can show that every effort has been made and every argument used to restore silver to its former position." He wrote Farrer, asking criticisms and explaining that the brief was intended to circulate among the principal men he had been consulting abroad; at home it should become part of his final report, by its demonstration of good faith bolstering his closing plea that coinage of silver dollars cease. He also wrote the British Association for the Advancement of Science, withdrawing his declination of an invitation to address that body soon, "I think there is no doubt that I can be prepared."

To distribute questionnaires on silver production from London, and to circulate a gold monometallist's argument for a bimetallic agreement from Berlin, were the natural procedures of an ardent reformer accustomed to publicize his projects. But the Secretary of State in his turn had "misgivings." He did not think consuls generally replied satisfactorily to queries of opinion and speculation, although he hoped they might do this for Atkinson; but he certainly objected to sending circulars to "individuals in the United States . . . connected with the silver question." That would be playing too far into the hands of Jones *et al.*

Berlin remained the scene of many a bimetallic defeat. Chapman Coleman, veteran Secretary of Legation, remembered vividly the earnest propaganda and the futility of earlier American efforts. Minister Pendleton had heard something of these events; he did not long grace the premises with his presence after Atkinson reached the Wilhelmstrasse. Nor did Bismarck, the finance ministers of the Empire and of Prussia, the president of the Reichsbank, or the Deputies to whom Atkinson had letters, prove conveniently available. From Herr Koch, Vice-President of the Reichsbank, Atkinson learned definitely that a bimetallic treaty between the United States, Germany, and the Latin Union, without England, was emphatically impossible. Koch confirmed a "suspicion" created by the president of the Bank of France, that "such a suggestion not only did no good but absolute harm," that the continued coinage of the Bland dollar made the United States appear (as Atkinson wrote Bayard) "as if we were in a scrape." The confidential agent sought the advice of the sensible Coleman, who discreetly agreed to the obvious: further urgency by the United States "tended more to retard than to promote joint action."

## VII

What more could a confidential agent find to do? Atkinson sought Interlaken, where his family awaited him, and where the impressive Dr. Ludwig Bamberger, leader of

German Liberals, the one held chiefly responsible for Germany's adoption of the gold standard, was vacationing. There his education in European economics and politics received the finishing touches. His armament theory was modified: Germany was making material progress in spite of her immense war treasure set aside in gold. Even if a bimetallic treaty were expedient for Europe financially, it was impossible politically; and the motives of the United States were suspect, as they had been ever since the Kelley incident.

Yet there was solace even in Bamberger, for he, like Farrer and Mallet, pricked up his ears at Atkinson's offer to find out the future prospects of silver production. Thus encouraged, Atkinson decided to give the British Association for the Advancement of Science, meeting at Manchester the end of the month, the chance to hear a full statement of his production theory, "which strikes everyone as so new and original." He assured Bayard, "I hope to justify my mission to you and to myself as well, [and] . . . to the silver men themselves." The moment Bayard received this information he was so alarmed that he speedily cabled the Minister at London, "communicate to Edward Atkinson it is not desirable that the position of the United States on bimetallism should be discussed before British Association at Manchester."

Atkinson obediently cut from his written speech an emphatic denial that the United States ever would become a silver standard nation—and set out for Manchester, as a private citizen, the terms of his commission having expired. There on Tuesday, September 6, he addressed Section F of the Association, devoted to Economic Science and Statistics (and Section C on Geology meeting jointly) on the question "What is Bimetallism?" Most of his audience were bimetallists, hostile to anyone with Atkinson's reputation as a monometallist; to them his attitude and his arguments were less than pleasing. He presented himself as "a practical business man" come to enlighten "professed bimetallists" concerning their "somewhat imperative demands."

They had erred, he chided, in emphasizing legal tender

and "so-called" demonetization, to the exclusion of other and more important factors in the monetary problem. For their benefit he would bring the question "into definite terms on the basis of facts," exposing the fallacies in the bimetallic reasoning.

From this odious eminence, Atkinson proceeded to expound his monetary beliefs, beliefs diametrically opposed to accepted bimetallic dogma. Gold was not scarce, nor had silver been demonetized, for it retained use as a subsidiary coin. The fall in silver was temporary and would remedy itself through a market expansion made possible by invention. Falling prices were not an evil but a mark of progress, and they in turn were not due to depreciation in the price of silver, but to cheapening of production and distribution. Concerning the book everyone was discussing—Dana Horton's *Silver Pound*, which was being advertised at the meeting by laudatory Macmillan circulars and by the active presence of the noted author himself—it was "historically valuable" but "wholly incorrect" in diagnosis. Bimetallists had better pay less attention to their legal tender arguments and more to the actual facts, or they would be guilty of retarding the restoration of silver.

Any bimetallist who accepted Atkinson's thesis would need to reverse himself pretty completely, something neither Horton nor his confrère could do. The meetings of Section F had been attracting unusual attention throughout, and next day the discussion tended to grow more concrete and less pleasant. Perhaps that was why no Englishman of mark seriously upheld monometallism at this meeting. Professor Foxwell, of the University of London, voiced his objections with devastating urbanity, remarking that Atkinson seemed to use monetary phrases "in a purely Pickwickian sense . . . which did not tend to clear up the issues in dispute." Moreton Frewen, he of the American wife and the wide travel, cited his own observations of hardships in Dakota as proof that the railroads were not the true explanation of cheap wheat. Professor J. S. Nicholson, of Edinburgh University, defended



bimetallism warmly, and effectively contradicted Atkinson's prophecy concerning future silver prices by citing low market trends of the past twelve years. He challenged foreigners present to state whether or not their countries would co-operate in establishing open mints on a joint standard.

Dana Horton, happy in the praise his recent volume was drawing from eminent sources, and recently honored with a seat on the platform during the presidential speech, rose with dignity to reply for the United States. His country favored bimetallism, he asserted, and no act had been passed by Congress, nor had any decision been made public by the Executive, to weaken the propositions made by his government (through himself) in 1878 and 1881.

With Horton's statement of the position of the United States Government, Atkinson expressed agreement; but he would not be maligned by British critics, and in his excitement made statements more revealing than politic. He denied that he was the champion of monometallism which the chairman and the committee had caused him to appear to be, unaware that he had created an impression which moved even the friendly *Manchester Guardian* to describe him as "a somewhat stern critic" of international bimetallism. If England were not indifferent to bimetallic claims, why were the monometallists absent from this discussion? If India had profited by a depreciated currency, it was the first instance of the kind to his knowledge; depreciation under paper money had hurt him as a manufacturer in the United States worse than Lancashire now was being hurt by exchange variations. What the United States badly needed was a rise in prices. "No man can demand the protection of debtors at the expense of creditors."

With this artless avowal of class viewpoint, Atkinson's contribution to the day's deliberations ended. However, in the evening he moved in a jollier circle. The president of the largest bank in Manchester gave a dinner party at which he was assured that it was not worth while to waste time in meeting the discussion, for it had neither strength nor importance. Comfort came likewise from his friend, Wells, who

wrote after he had read the debate, "What a set of old fools you did get among at the Association. . . . As you say, I would [not] give a brass farthing for the views of anyone over there except Sir Thomas Farrer who is as clear as a bell."

However, opinion at home was none too bell-like; the United States had the "farthing" as well as the "Farrer" type of thought, and therefore Atkinson's great concern became the fortifying of his report. He and his family reached Boston, after a voyage so smooth and pleasant that it must have contrasted delightfully with some of the disconcerting contacts preceding it, and he lost little time in visiting Bayard. He secured the Secretary's consent to soliciting a few letters from conservative, non-political sources, to support the contention that overproduction of silver was improbable and that coinage of Bland dollars must cease. He helped persuade a New York bimetallic committee that this was no time for it to display activity. He played host to Lord Herschell and others of the Royal Silver Commission, who visited the United States to form their own conclusions; and he enjoyed the expert co-operation of Professor F. W. Taussig, of Harvard, who translated Soetbeer's *Materialen* in order that Atkinson's report might be accompanied by a reputable discussion of economic aspects of the gold and silver question.

This lengthy and learned addition to that report made Atkinson question "whether the numerous tails will not waggle the little dog at the head"; but he decided no document in existence gave "so many facts or so much information upon this vexed question." The report was a solace.

By this process his ideas became more fluid. He decided that abstract justice required payment of debts in a value equivalent to what the debtor had received. But in the United States "abstract justice is impracticable. It is better and cheaper to pay gold than not to pay." In Europe, on the other hand, debts must be paid in depreciated money or be repudiated. Consequently, Giffen, Farrer, and others, who tended to boycott silver, were "not entitled to full standing." Giffen particularly was "too much of a statistician to be a

good economist." This conclusion was confirmed a bit later with the sage private observation—anyone who undertakes to apply statistics to the determination of any particular immediate transaction would be *bound* to fail."

To Cleveland a public announcement of Atkinson's activities did not seem politically useful. The report was shunted to a quiet, separate publication, and the presidential message to Congress was silent on silver. Instead, it raised a clarion call on the tariff. In the resulting excitement silver was forgotten.

## BUNIN: ECLECTIC OF THE FUTURE

NIKANDER STRELSKY

THE 1933 award of the Nobel prize for literature provoked a considerable storm among the critics. The name of the *émigré* writer was not well known to the public. Bunin's work had never had a popular vogue, as had the work of Gorki, Andreyev, and others of his contemporaries. News of the award was received with a mixture of surprise, satisfaction, and dismay. Those who knew his work immediately split into two camps: one applauded the choice as a fitting, if tardy, recognition of a great literature in the person of its leading representative; the other denounced him contemptuously as a morbid decadent with no social consciousness.

Recent reviews of Bunin's work, in this country and abroad, have struck the sharpest contradictions and paradoxes. The rock on which the critics generally have split has been the old question as to whether art should function as social criticism. Since Bunin has never concerned himself with political or social doctrines, this has permitted certain people to dismiss him at once. This has naturally been the attitude of Fascists and Communists alike. Both friends and foes have credited him with being a virtuoso in style. Yet the widely divergent opinions as to the other qualities of his writing are simply proof that his work cannot be easily relegated to this or that category, and that a true estimate of him must transcend too facile comparisons and narrow political prejudice.

Bunin has been labelled "a miraculous anachronism." This is one of those half-truths which is no truth at all. It is a fact that Bunin is a logical continuation of the "classics," those great figures of Russian literature who ended with the turn of the century. In a narrow, literal sense, Bunin has concluded a tradition which can have no further continuity, since the conditions which created it have vanished. His is its last voice, and in certain technical aspects, its finest.

Yet Bunin is more than a mere link with the past, and the true significance and value of his work will not permit it to be contained within a period. What has been called his *uncontemporaneity* is really his *timelessness*. The kind of people he writes about, the kind of life he pictures, will be as true in essence, and as living, decades from now, as they were before the Revolution.

Moreover, in his art and in his outlook, Bunin stands for the relation between the past and future more than any other Russian writer. There is considerable room for argument with the defenders of Gorki's claim to the Nobel prize, and it may be successfully debated that Bunin is not only less a figure of the past than Gorki, but is far more significantly a prophet of a new generation. This may be postulated, in spite of the fact that Bunin stands completely outside all Soviet writing, in spite of the fact that in his work there is an utter absence of any reflection of the Communist Revolution.

In a recent article on the newest trends in literature, a French critic, Jean Servi re, says, "It seems to me that the most interesting young writers today seek to instill in their art a predominance of what Edmond Jaloux once called, 'magic realism', and which we prefer to name, 'transfigured realism'. This may be, strictly speaking, one of the pseudonyms of classicism. Thus, the post-war period may be able to serve us at least in this: to reveal in daily experience, the signs, the symbols, the poetry of life."

If he had been speaking specifically of Bunin, this French critic could not have been more apt. It is exactly this quality of "magic realism" which identifies Bunin. Thus, in his subject-matter, in his philosophy, Bunin is closely in tune with these newest voices in literature, and is indeed a forerunner of these new writers.

Like Tolstoy, like Turgenev, and others of his predecessors, Bunin came of noble, landowning stock. He was born in Voronezh in 1870, in that same province which has been the cradle of so much of Russian literature, of an ancient lineage, whose "origins were lost in the mists of time." Once wealthy,

his family had arrived at his birth in that state of impoverishment immortalized in Chekov's *The Cherry Orchard*. Bunin was one of four children of a gentle, sensitive, pious mother, and a high-spirited, indulgent, spendthrift father, whose total lack of business ability ruined his patrimony and deprived his children of any worldly advantages save an aristocratic birth. Bunin's childhood and youth were passed in an atmosphere of a gentry fallen upon evil days, set against a background of primitive, peasant Russia. The scenes of his boyhood have furnished Bunin with much of the material for his tales, and in this sense conditioned his work; but the contrast between the decay of his own social class, and the animal-like existence of the peasants did not condition his moral outlook. Bunin has never been a mourner for things vanished; he shows none of the pessimism and sentimental nostalgia for the past characteristic of some of his colleagues, and it is a gross error to compare his work to "the entries in the complaint book of the Berlin station," as one hostile critic has done.

A second important influence in Bunin's development was his early study of the classics of European literature. His admiration for Flaubert, Loti, and Leconte de Lisle, as well as for Tolstoy, Turgenev, and Pushkin, has set a certain stamp upon him as an artist. He won his first spurs in literature as a translator, and helped to introduce American writers to the Russian public by his superb translation of Longfellow's *The Song of Hiawatha*. He was also acclaimed for his versions of Byron's dramatic poems, and was first given the Pushkin prize in recognition for this side of his talent, as well as for his own verse.

Another factor in Bunin's growth was his extensive travel, throughout Europe and the Far East. This not only broadened his horizon and enlarged the scope of his work, but allowed him the freshness of perspective which the returned traveler feels toward his own land.

Bunin's channel of development was defined early in his life. One of the significant and interesting things about him has been his consistency, his individual aloofness. As a

young man, in common with other intellectuals, he came into contact with the underground revolutionary movement; but his own individualism and his highly conscious ego forbade his giving himself over to a sense of class consciousness, or an urge to reform society. Bunin never took any part in the many warring aesthetic and political groups which sprang into being during the last years of the nineteenth century. He is rather an exemplar of that opinion which holds that the vital stream of artistic tradition is always conveyed by those who stand a little aside from the movements of their time. His course was consistent and steady. He never felt any inner revolution, any need to ally himself. People who belong to schools of art are always trying to prove something. Bunin did not want to prove anything. He simply wanted to portray people and life, wholly and truthfully and beautifully. Thus he found the natural expression of his being and his artistic entity in an ancient and traditional stream, and he has never repudiated it. He had no need to break off from the past, to discover new extravagances, to deny or destroy, in order to fertilize his creativeness.

In our day, this attitude constitutes a sort of uniqueness. Today the world is so preoccupied with doctrines and theories that an art like Bunin's appears solitary and inconspicuous. This accounts partially for the fact that he has never been what is called "a popular writer." And it is doubtful whether the fame attached to the Nobel prize has considerably added to his sales. There is nothing revolutionary or controversial or sensational in him to attract attention.

The lack of this obvious kind of novelty has caused some critics to call him unoriginal. Prince Mirsky has said, "Bunin has added nothing to the national literary capital which is not implicitly and sometimes explicitly contained in Turgenev, Goncharov, Saltykov, Tolstoy, or Chekov, and by the side of the least of these, ancestors, he is little more than a pigmy." This kind of short-sightedness is a natural result of the materialistic conception of life, and renders the critic blind to the special qualities which lift Bunin from the status of an imita-



tor. Bunin has points of likeness with these other writers, but he remains himself, fundamentally unlike. His originality does not lie so much in his form, nor yet in his subject-matter, but rather within himself, in his relation to life and in his recording of that relation.

Bunin began his literary career as a poet. His conception of life is that of a poet, and this conception has distinguished all his work, prose as well as verse. This is in keeping with the fact that he has continued to publish poetry to the present day, conceiving it, as Gleb Struve says, "as more than a preliminary school, as useful training and a discipline, as it was to Turgenev"; but rather as "an indispensable part of his artistic self-expression."

Bunin made his literary *début* in 1887, when he was seventeen, and he continued writing verse until 1892, when his first prose work appeared. He was three times awarded the Pushkin prize for literature, and later was elected a member of the Russian Academy of Letters, along with Gorki, Kuprin, and Andreyev.

His first prose volume appeared in 1897, and from then on he continued to write poems, short stories, and novels. It is in the field of the short story that Bunin has made his greatest and most perfect achievement. The Swedish Academy recognized this in awarding him the Nobel prize, for special commendation was given his best-known tale, "The Gentleman from San Francisco."

Bunin himself has defined his own subject-matter in the opening sentence of his marvelous short story, "The Dreams of Chang": "What does it matter of whom we speak? Any that have lived and that live upon this earth deserve to be the subject of our discourse." Generally speaking, however, his work falls into three categories: studies of the Russian peasant and of the declining landowning class, studies of adolescents, and oriental tales.

There is little plot and sometimes none at all. The structure of his work is elemental, bare, and symmetrical. The number of characters is always small, often only one or two.

Bunin frequently concentrates his attention on one figure, merely suggesting the others, or showing them only through the eyes of his central figure. This device is used in duplicate in his best-known novel, *The Village*. The book is a large diptych of peasant life, with two chief characters; in the first part, we see the story through the eyes of Tikhon, and only through his eyes do we know Kuzma; in the last half, we see Tikhon through Kuzma's eyes.

Throughout all Bunin's work runs an ever-recurrent theme: the mystery of life and death; and it is this mystery which chiefly occupies the writer. It is not the individual soul and mind and heart of the protagonist on which he focuses his attention, but on the relationship between this man or that woman to the eternal verities of love and death. Bunin has often been attacked as a pessimist with a morbid interest in destruction and finalities, because of this intense preoccupation with the manifestations of death. But nothing could be more untrue than to call it morbid. Instead, it is simply one other aspect of Bunin's intense love of life, and life and death are to him only two different manifestations of the same thing. In his last, semi-autobiographical work, *The Life of Arseniev*, or *The Well of Days*, he speaks of his own "former, immemorial lives," and declares that man is devoid of a sense of his beginning as well as his end. In this philosophy, we see another phase of his timelessness: life to him is a continuous stream of consciousness, like a mysterious effluvium in which we live and breathe and suffer and are enraptured; and it is in these exceptional acute moments of awareness in the presence of death, or in the anguish of love, that we most nearly approach a perception of the nameless secret of existence. It is an intense curiosity, an intuitive urge, which prompts him to return again and again to this theme, not in any sense a morbidity. For this reason, all the details in Bunin's descriptions, so marvelous in themselves, the actual events, and the implied underlying complexities in his characters, take secondary importance. One feels that one regards the scene a little obliquely,

as if, with Bunin, one attended a larger moment, a more cosmic truth.

In this connection one observes another aspect of Bunin's relation to the vanguard of modern writers. His work contains within it an implication of that profound and elusive world of the subconscious, which is the chief object of study of many ultra-moderns. Occasionally he penetrates directly into that world. Yet he never attempts any sort of scientific analysis, as if he felt it too vast and mysterious for definition, and the reader is made aware of it only in brief, illuminating flashes.

In his marvelous evocation of atmosphere, we see the most striking quality of Bunin's talent. He accomplishes this by means of an extraordinarily acute sensory equipment, which renders him intensely alive to the shape and color and texture of the world about him. He has the keen perception of an animal, and a discrimination of the most fastidious refinement. In a few words, in a phrase or two, he can conjure up a whole scene. In "The Dreams of Chang," he does not need to spend paragraphs to describe the heat of the Red Sea. He merely says, "The other men of the ship, whose faces were brick-red, with oily eyes, whereas their foreheads were white and perspiring"—and one immediately feels translated into that consuming, hot radiance.

Bunin says of himself that his early ambition was to become a painter, and he refers to his "peculiar sensitiveness to light and air." It is as a painter that Bunin has chosen to depict life. It is an intensity of being, rather than an intensity of doing, which marks all his work, and this intensity is wonderfully evinced in his descriptions. He has given us some indelible impressions of the Russian countryside, of the tropics, of the infinitely varied sea.

Yet the visual sense is not the only one expressed; this is so often the only one lesser writers seem to possess; but Bunin evokes a mood, a scene, through all five of his. One remembers the "reeking of coal and Jewish kitchens" in the house where he lived in Orel; the pungent smells in the print-

ing shop, and the stench of the tanneries in Baturino; it is the "dry" quality of the rye lying ripe in the fields, which exactly conveys the quality of the autumn landscape; and how vividly one recognizes that smell of "cold sulphur breathed in the air coming from the inmost furrowed depths of the sea"!

But it is not merely an atmosphere of the world of the senses which Bunin so wondrously creates. Flaubert instructed the young De Maupassant always "to choose the exact word for the exact meaning." Bunin has profited by this precept, but he makes the exact word convey more than its literal meaning, as if through the prompting of an additional sixth sense. This gives his scenes a sort of fourth dimensional quality, and provides that pervasive suggestiveness, that haunting evocativeness, so characteristic of his work. Every word is chosen and placed for its specific shape and color and for its rhythmic and emotional relation to the rest of the sentence. This gives his language a perennial freshness and a quality of magic. Bunin inflicts despair upon the translator, for his effects are so often effects of style. There is never a superfluous word; everything is said with the utmost conciseness and subtlety, yet with transparent clarity.

It has been said that Bunin's true hero is the Russian language. Certainly he employs the rich and resourceful tongue of his native land to its fullest capacity in delicacy and point and meaning, reaching a refinement never before attained.

Even the harshest enemies of Bunin have praised this rare and magnificent talent. Prince Mirsky has said that Bunin is the only living Russian of whose language the old classic writers would have approved; and Renato Poggioli granted, that while he had no originality, he was nevertheless "one of those rarest of writers who have the divine right to be detached and uncontemporary."

It is useless to look to Bunin for profound expositions of philosophy, or for social criticism of life. He is not interested in the mechanics of our civilization. Nor is he interested in probing the individual, in the delicate dissection of personality,

as was Chekov. There are no full-length creations of character in his work, as in Tolstoy. His men and women are usually types, and quite ordinary types. Only occasionally are we allowed a penetrating flash of insight into individual souls. As Struve says, "the analytical methods of a Dostoyevsky are entirely alien to him."

This does not mean, however, that Bunin never sees people as individuals, as exceptional. The two remarkable beings in "The Case of Lieutenant Yelaghin" are proof of the contrary. What, then, is the explanation for his apparent aversion to psychological exploration?

Bunin himself suggests the answer, when he says, "The most terrible thing in this world is man with his soul." Struve amplifies this idea further when he refers to Bunin's "characteristic conviction of the fundamental impenetrability and inconceivableness of another man's soul." It seems as if Bunin deliberately chose the average man or woman, or the immature youth, as a device of simplification, the better to express his marvelling sense of the wonderful and infinite contained within the commonplace.

It is his uncanny ability to communicate to the reader, directly and simply, this sense of marvel and mystery, which lifts Bunin above the status of a mere craftsman, however expert. It is not an act of definition, but rather a process of revelation. It is this faculty which makes Bunin unique and original in Russian literature. It is the faculty of a poet and a seer, and is the key to his whole purpose and method.

The definition of requirement for the Nobel prize specifies that a writer shall have produced "distinguished work of an idealistic tendency." Bunin is the perfect example of the pure artist, striving toward an ideal, the old ideal of truth, beauty and the wholeness of life. In his work we find it restated with new authority. Bunin stands for a sort of consummation of the past, but it is a past which has within it the germs of a new life. The "magic realism" which marks all his work, marks him also as the heir, not only of the past, before man doubted miracles, but of the more immediate past,

the age of science and reason, the age of "realism." The newest voices of our decade speak again of a sense of the unknown and the unknowable in life. Ours is an age in which poetry and science, intuition and logic, find that they have more ground in common between them than they had suspected. Bunin stands in just this attitude toward life, and in the expression of this attitude in literature, he is an inaugurator of the new era.

As in the case of all truly great artists, it is not easy to place him in a pigeonhole. It is a truism that genius in any creative field becomes less easy to define within a narrow category the higher it aspires. One cannot say of Bunin that he is a classicist, a romanticist, or a realist. He is all three of these. He is a classicist in his perfection of form and style, in the symmetry and logic of his technical structure, in his objectivity and restraint. He is also a classicist in another sense. No one has written adequately of his poise, the poise of the relationship between himself and the sensuous world, between himself and the shadowy world of the psyche, between himself and the cosmos. This is the reason why Bunin, unlike most other *émigré* writers, has continued writing in exile, without sign of diminution or decline. His strength lies with himself, as if he felt an innate harmony and oneness of life, an infinite resource of spirit, and depended in no way upon environment to fertilize his creative power.

He is a realist in the so-called "clinical" detachment with which he observes and records. This has misled some people into calling him cold and metallic. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Even in his most subjective passages, such as his fictionized autobiography, *The Life of Arseniev*, he does not permit himself to abandon his cool impartiality; but underneath it lies deep and passionate feeling, by which he communicates to the reader "profound and troubled emotions," striking deep chords that echo in our minds long afterwards.

He is a realist also in the unflinching fidelity with which he examines the brutal and ugly side of life. Romantic, cer-

tainly, are his preoccupation with love and death, the sensuous beauty of his language, the exoticism of his oriental tales, and his poetic conception of existence.

Even in his studies of Russian peasant life, Bunin is the pure artist. He has been praised by some critics, otherwise hostile, for this section of his work, and the Soviet government selected many of these stories for reprinting. Bunin was the first important writer to reveal the reverse side of the pre-war, fashionable worship of the simplicity of the Russian peasant. Yet even in his scathing indictment of the ugliness and degradation of the peasant's poverty, Bunin intended no social message. It was incidental that he was a Jeremiah of the future Revolution, and it was not his purpose to preach a warning or teach a lesson. He was simply painting a certain aspect of life.

Bunin is not without faults. He lacks the healthy, rugged vitality of a Pushkin. He has no sense of humor, and there is no high-spirited bravado in his fortitude. There is no robust laughter in him, no gusto, no red-bloodedness. This is the reason why his studies of the peasant are incomplete, and lack a full, rounded development. He can show no gallery of richly sculptured characters. It is not his purpose to expound wise philosophies of life. The melodic rhythms and cadences of his writing are that of chamber music, not the diapason of a full orchestra.

Yet as an artist, as an individualist, as an original and distinguished exponent of a great aesthetic tradition in contemporary terms, and in the clarity and beauty of his vision, there are few who can stand beside him.



## REFLECTIONS ON THE SOUTHERN TRADITION

W. T. COUCH

### I

IT IS now five years\* since the publication of *I'll Take My Stand*, that impassioned plea to younger Southerners to "come back to the support of the Southern tradition." Since the publication of this work, numerous essays have appeared on Southern themes in which reference has been reverently made to "the Southern tradition." At least two books, *Agrarianism* by T. J. Cauley, and *The South Looks at Its Past* by B. B. Kendrick and A. M. Arnett, have received inspiration from *I'll Take My Stand*, and have not raised any objections to the views of the South and the agrarian tradition presented in that volume.

In spite of the frequent use of the terms "the Southern tradition" and the "agrarian tradition," no one has taken the trouble to define them. It is my purpose to show here that there is no sound basis in the South's past for the ideas which have been presented as flowing from "the Southern tradition."

Now what are the chief doctrines of those who make their appeal to this magical phrase? It is impossible to answer with any certainty because of the confusion which prevails in their writings. But a few definite ideas seem to be common to them. They revere their tradition before all things. They abjure progress of all kinds, industrial, agricultural, moral, social, political. They regard science and education, the two chief agencies of what the rest of us have imagined to be progress, as enemies of mankind. And they argue that their attitude on these subjects is in accord with "the Southern tradition."

Is there any secure basis for these views?

\* This article was written about a year ago. Since that time a number of articles and books have appeared advocating agrarianism; but they have merely elaborated, without correcting, the historic astigmatism pointed out here.

II

One of the most convenient faculties in any discussion is the ability simply to forget or to ignore important facts. Now there are some important facts which, as a consequence of being referred to innumerable times, have tended to lose their significance. Like the mountaineer who gets up in the morning and does not trouble to look at the glowing sky, the mountain tops above the ocean of mist, and the glory of the rising sun, it is the habit of many of us to be familiar with facts of large importance without having any conception of their meaning.

There was once in the history of this country a conflict of world-wide importance. This conflict culminated in a war which the schoolbooks call the Revolutionary War. In the long stream of history, this war is a part of the English and American traditions. At the time of the conflict, however, it was a definite break with tradition. Some of the greatest men this country has produced, certainly the greatest Southerners, led in this revolution in breaking the bonds of the past. But George Washington did not lead the armies of the Revolution, he did not preside over the destinies of a newly conceived nation, merely to make a break with the past. He broke one tradition, not merely to establish another, but to establish another that, in his opinion at least, was better than the one it replaced. The traditional view is that this was a great step in human progress. I am enough of a traditionalist to accept this view.

On the other hand, the Tories of the Revolutionary Period were the true traditionalists *of that time*. There were, of course, Southern Tories, but could their ideas and actions be called in any sense a positive part of *the* Southern tradition? What, then, is the Southern tradition? Whatever it may be in the minds of those who use the phrase, certainly in the history of the South, revolutionary thought and action have been a large, if not the most important, part of it.

## III

It is not difficult to explain the failure of men who have always lived among mountains really to see them. But surely the explorer, the man who has seen oceans and plains, could not be excused for failing to recognize mountains when after a long period of travel he actually comes in the midst of them. Such an explorer would naturally be suspected of having defective eyes or brain or both. What can be said of those who live among and write about Southern traditions, without any glimmerings of what they are?

If the South can only be brought to remember "the Southern tradition," we are told, it will straightway abjure science, education, industry, and that most ridiculous and un-Southern of all things, that product of eighteenth-century optimism and shallowness, that snare and delusion, that new embodiment of the devil—the idea of, and the effort toward, progress.

But is this denial of progress a part of any Southern tradition that has ever been of any importance?

Since Southern agrarian doctrines stem from Thomas Jefferson, it might be well to consider what he thought on these subjects. "And I am," he said in a letter to Elbridge Gerry, "for encouraging the progress of science in all its branches; and not for raising a hue and cry against the sacred name of philosophy; for awing the human mind by stories of raw-head and bloody bones to a distrust of its own vision, and to repose implicitly on that of others; to go backward instead of forwards to look for improvement; to believe that government, religion, morality, and every other science were in the highest perfection in ages of the darkest ignorance, and that nothing can ever be devised more perfect than what was established by our forefathers."

Again, in a letter to John Adams, he wrote: "One of the questions, you know, on which our parties took different sides, was on the improvability of the human mind in science, in ethics, in government, etc. Those who advocated reformation of institutions, *pari passu* with the progress of science, maintained that no definite limits could be assigned to that prog-

ress. The enemies of reform, on the other hand, denied improvement, and advocated steady adherence to the principles, practices and institutions of our fathers, which they represented as the consummation of wisdom, and acme of excellence, beyond which the human mind could never advance."

Did Jefferson stand alone in the South? Hardly. In abolishing laws of primogeniture and entail, in disestablishing the Church in its statute for religious freedom, in its bill of rights the Virginia legislature did not blindly follow existing traditions. Nor did other Southern states do so when they followed Virginia.

Washington leading a revolution, heading a revolutionary government, introducing the best and latest methods on his plantations, improving the quality of his grain, keeping his books, furnishes as little comfort as Jefferson to those who argue that the agrarian tradition of the South is unscientific and unprogressive and must be kept so.

"The progressive-farmer ideal," said Andrew Nelson Lytle in his essay in *I'll Take My Stand*, "is a contradiction in terms. A stalk of cotton grows. It does not progress." Jefferson improving the plow, importing new plants, is then a contradiction in terms—as well as the source of inspiration for Southern agrarianism. And has the cotton plant never been improved? Perhaps it does not progress of itself. But it has certainly been improved and better adapted to soil, climate, and the avoidance of destruction by pests, as anyone with an even elementary acquaintance with the history of the plant would know. Yet one may quibble as to whether this is progress for the cotton plant. Which reminds me of the little girl who broke her arm. Her mother picked her up and, frightened by the sight of the arm, repeated over and over: "She has broken her arm, she has broken her arm." Finally, a younger sister who was standing by, in an effort to console her mother, said reassuringly: "No, mother. It's not broken. It's just bent."

Implicit in this antagonism to the idea of progress is the notion that the effort toward improvement will not only not

end in improvement but is the first step toward degeneration. It is not surprising to find this view given definite statement in a book, *God Without Thunder*, by another agrarian, John Crowe Ransom. But if this view is accepted, all basis for discussion disappears. Men have already gone so far in degeneration that there is no hope for them. And the efforts of the agrarians to improve their lot by persuading them to accept tradition cannot fail to end except in causing further degeneration. At the same time there is no reason to believe that the efforts of those who believe in progress will prove any more detrimental to the real interests of man. But turn this degenerative process upside down, and what have we? Nothing more or less than our old friend progress, now fully equipped with all necessary credentials, with his existence and identity certified by those who have denied him.

Surely Mr. Ransom and Mr. Lytle and the other members of their group cannot be unaware that agriculture in both the old and the new South has a history, and that that history is largely a record of efforts of men like Edmund Ruffin to improve seeds, fertilizers, implements, and methods, to introduce new crops, to classify soils and improve the adjustment of crops to them.

Who has ever studied the history of the South and failed to thumb through DeBow's *Industrial Resources of the South and Southwest*? And who after thumbing through this work alone could fail to discover active interest on the part of leading ante-bellum Southerners in efforts to improve agriculture, to cultivate the sciences, to develop industries, to build roads and railroads, to make navigation safe on the Mississippi, to establish popular education, in short, to bring to the South the fruits of progress?

Among the leaders whose names appear in the three volumes of this important work in advocacy of progressive measures are John C. Calhoun, Robert Y. Hayne, William C. Preston, J. H. Hammond, Joel R. Poinsett, Alexander H. Stephens, Matthew Fontaine Maury, R. W. Allston, R. G.

Barnwell, T. P. Kettell, J. C. Nott, S. A. Cartwright, Judah P. Benjamin, William Harper.

Did these men argue about the reality of progress and doubt whether there was any such thing? Perhaps a few did. But the only records they have left indicate that most of them harbored no doubts whatever. They were interested in the agencies, the means and methods of progress. The rest was assumed.

The institution of slavery did not, as one might think, exclude the idea of progress. On the contrary, many antebellum Southerners, among whom was Calhoun, argued that since the South had the best organization of society, it should be able to make the greatest progress. And actually, they argued, life in the South was better. It was Calhoun who said that the different races take "the front and rear ranks in the march of progress." Inequality of condition, he said, is "indispensable to progress. In order to understand why this is so, it is necessary to bear in mind, that the main spring to progress is, the desire of individuals to better their condition. . . ." The Negro race, he believed, had progressed under slavery. "Never before has the black race of Central Africa, from the dawn of history to the present day, attained a condition so civilized and so improved, not only physically but morally and intellectually. It came among us in a low, degraded, and savage condition, and in the course of a few generations it has grown up under the fostering care of our institutions, reviled as they have been, to its present comparatively civilized condition." He admitted that the North had gained in wealth until it was ahead of the South. But this was a direct result, he held, of a tariff which confiscated Southern wealth and gave it to Northern manufacturers.

The typical attitude of Southern leaders is perhaps best given in a speech by Hugh Swinton Legaré in the House of Representatives of the United States. Legaré does not question seriously the reality of progress. He assumes it to be real. He compares two agencies of progress, the schoolhouse and the steam engine. The latter he describes as "the most

powerful instrument of pacification and commerce, and therefore of improvement and happiness that the world has ever seen . . . the social effects of this great instrument of modern improvement have been singularly promoted by . . . the cultivation of cotton, and its effects, through the commerce it fosters, upon the condition of society . . . the single circumstance of bringing the wonderfully cheap fabrics produced by modern machinery, within the reach of even the humblest of the laboring classes . . . will signally contribute to elevate the condition of the poor in the social scale. . . . A people well clad and well housed will be sure to provide themselves with all the other comforts of life."

Here is no pale abstraction. Here is a firm grasp on immediate realities, food, clothes, housing. And here is perhaps the greatest weakness of the old South: its lack of interest in abstract science, in rigorous disinterested thought, its emphasis on the immediate, its blind devotion to "practical" progressiveness, its uncritical acceptance of its own organization of society as the best possible. And here directly contradicting those who talk about "the Southern tradition" and hang unprogressive attitudes on it, is an attitude that can be heard any day in any chamber of commerce or luncheon club of America.

It would be wearisome to present more evidence that the belief in progress was common to the great majority of the leaders of the old South, that the progressive spirit of Henry Grady and Walter Hines Page, anathematized by those who write of "the Southern tradition," was not so very different from that of the Southern leaders who had preceded them. In fact, in reviewing the evidence, one cannot help believing that those who write of *the* Southern tradition today, who use it as their inspiration in opposing and ridiculing the effort to improve man's lot in this world, have not derived their ideas from Southern records of the South's past. It may be that they have read only those writings which have pictured the leaders of the old South as wholly reactionary, as men without higher ambitions, without ideas and ideals, in short as mere



slave drivers. I do not know any body of material from which such notions could have been derived except the writings of the abolitionists.

## IV

Now it is not possible to reject completely this ill-begotten tradition. Whatever the leaders of the old South desired, however much they wished to promote education and science, in spite of their agricultural societies, their conventions for the discussion of internal improvements and their plans for the introduction and expansion of industry, they did not succeed in making any very great achievements. In 1789 Washington, a Southerner, fully aware of the importance of inventions, recommended the passage of patent laws to encourage inventors. But only four years later, in the period of the South's greatest relative prosperity, when the excuse of poverty could not be made, the invention which was to determine the future course of Southern development was made by a Yankee, Eli Whitney. What ingredients for a Southern tradition can be secured from such historical events as these? Could it be argued that the Southern people are not inventive? Or that their social system was one which discouraged invention? The first argument, I believe, would be ridiculous, since Southern people are of the same stock as Northern. The second is unquestionably true. Experience in handling machinery is a prerequisite to invention. The ante-bellum social system was not favorable to industry in the South, and the consequence is that comparatively few inventions were made in this region.

But if leading Southerners, like Washington, were anxious to encourage invention, and at the same time support a social system which made invention in the South practically impossible, what can be said to be the Southern tradition in this instance? I know of no metaphysical procedure which will permit the recognition of one aspect of this situation as part of the tradition without recognizing the other. This means, in brief, that if there is anything which may be called *the Southern tradition*, it is not the puny, miserable, ill-be-

gotten yet determined-to-be genteel thing that has been presented by those who have set themselves up as its special guardian and propagator. If the singular must be used, if we must speak of *the* Southern tradition, if we speak truly we must speak of something of vast proportions, something with room for almost innumerable internal contradictions. It must include the almost ideal life of some plantations and the indescribable brutality, filth, and ignorance of others. It must include a large number of yeoman farmers and their families. It must not forget the poor whites or the free as well as the enslaved Negroes. It must remember the emancipation societies that flourished in the South at one time, and it should learn of such settlements as Salem in North Carolina, where an admirable and almost unknown way of living prevailed. It must remember the diversity of the regions, the tidewater, the river valleys, the sandhills, the Piedmont, the mountains, each making possible its own characteristic types of life and its own traditions.

It is not possible, except at the price of historical truth, to speak of the plantation tradition, whether of the best, the worst, or of an imagined dominant type, as *the* Southern tradition. A certain type of plantation tradition persists in the movies and is embedded in the popular mind. But it has no more validity than the one of the poor whites which has prevailed widely for many years both in the South and outside. The poor white tradition is being given new life by such writers as Erskine Caldwell, and the modern historian who is interested in the origin and spread of such tradition would find it interesting to sit through a performance of Caldwell's *Tobacco Road*. A friend of mine, a Southerner, horribly oppressed by the play as I was when I saw it, nevertheless was not too depressed to find amusement in a comment he overheard. After the play, a woman near him said to her companion, "And Southerners think they're better than we are."

## V

The South, then, has many traditions. One of its most persistent traditions has been the belief of its leaders, as well

as the great majority of the people, in the possibility of man's using his intelligence and will to improve his condition. It may be difficult to see how any ideas of progress were held in the old South, but the indisputable fact remains that however confused and mistaken leaders of this region may have been, they certainly regarded themselves as agents in the effort toward human improvement. They were probably no more mistaken in their views than the prophets of the new South, who, when the old system was gone, found comparatively easy the task of introducing rapidly the prevailing patterns of the industrial North. It is impossible today not to be skeptical of the reasoning processes of the leaders of both the old and the new South. The disparities between possibilities and achievements are too great not to be noticed by any careful observer.

But can it be said truthfully that there have been no improvements of genuine and lasting value? In respect of sanitation and health alone, conditions prevailing in the South today are far better than they were even so short a time as forty years ago, when yellow fever was still a menace to every city on the coast. For this improvement we may thank Walter Reed, a Southerner. To other Southerners, Charles Wardell Stiles and Walter Hines Page, we owe the fight on hookworm, an epochal combat which has not yet been concluded. Much improvement has come simply as a result of willingness, sometimes pitifully reluctant and slow, to accept ideas originating outside the South. There was never any danger that the South would permanently refuse to stamp out the deadly germs of yellow fever once the method of doing so had been discovered, even though the germ theory was of foreign origin. Southern traditions in this instance were readily pliant. Was this a defect or a virtue?

## VI

I do not believe the guardians of "the Southern tradition" have any monopoly on the sense of the importance of past experience, on recognition of the indispensable functions of social customs and habits. Living in a world without ac-

cepted ways of doing things, without conventions of thinking and acting in every aspect of life, would tax too greatly the energies and intelligence of any body of men. Traditional ways, even if wrong, are indispensable to man; and no group of men has ever been found anywhere, even in the most primitive state, that has been devoid of social habits. In the writings of the devotees of "the Southern tradition," this idea in embryo is repeated over and over again, as if it is a discovery of theirs, when, as a matter of fact, it is one of the most familiar notions of modern social science, and, indeed, is as ancient as social thought itself. They recognize dimly the diversity of traditional patterns, but without knowing their own or others any too well, they immediately pronounce their own the best. They remind me of a farmer I once knew. This farmer lived on a modest place of a hundred acres or so. He had never traveled. He knew very little about the world a few miles from his home. But he knew his land. He knew his cows and calves and mules. Every one of them was dear to him because they were his own; even more they had grown up with him and he loved them as he loved himself. If anyone ever suggested that someone else had a better cow than his, the very idea was outrageous. It could not be true. His were the best. And that was the end of it for him. The advocates of "the Southern tradition" do not have the farmer's excuse, ignorance and sincere affection for his ignorance. I do not know how to explain their aberrations. For they have failed completely to grasp the richness and wide diversity of their heritage.

## VII

Let us turn for a moment to the "agrarian" tradition. "The Southern tradition," we are told, is "agrarian." But did Southerners of the ante-bellum period think so? One of the most prolific writers of the old South was J. D. B. DeBow. He was widely known both personally and through his writings, his editorial work, his connection with the United States Bureau of the Census, and through his important *Review*. What did he think agrarianism was? In an article

"The Earth and Man," in his *Review*, he wrote: "The Proudhons and Fouriers, French Socialists, Continental Republicans, Northern Abolitionists, who setting out with the perfect equality in every respect of all the nations and families of men, proclaim the doctrines of universal republicanism, *universal agrarianism* [DeBow's italics] and, in addition, the fulness of liberty and freedom from all restraint, stand ready to fit, as in the bed of Procrustes, Hottentot and Bushman, semi-civilized Negro and Caucasian, to institutions of a common shape and character!"

As Abel P. Upshur saw it, the South's peculiar institution was a bulwark against agrarianism. Its tendency, he said, "is to distract the purposes and to bind the arm of the agrarian and leveler." From 1820 until the Civil War, this was the dominant Southern attitude toward agrarianism. If we consider for a moment the nature of this doctrine, it will not be difficult to see why this is so.

Jefferson is the great source of Southern agrarian philosophy. In his opinion, "Cultivators of the earth are the most valuable citizens. They are the most vigorous, the most independent, the most virtuous, and they are tied to their country, and wedded to its liberty and interests, by the most lasting bonds." Jefferson was also opposed to slavery, and he was an equalitarian. While I do not believe he ever said so in so many words, I think it is clear he believed the best society to be one dominated by small farmers tilling their own soil. This is the heart of agrarianism, and it explains the antagonism of many ante-bellum Southern leaders to Jefferson and his "French ideas."

Agrarianism has not always been a respectable, harmless doctrine which could be advocated without fear by journalists and college professors. On the contrary, at times in the past it has been as thoroughly detested by those whose interests have been threatened by it as communism is detested in America today. In ancient Rome numerous laws were passed attempting to divide up equally among the plebeians the *ager publicus* or public lands. In the effort to break up the con-

centration of lands in the ownership of a few families, maximum holdings were prescribed. The Gracchi brothers were murdered by the patrician owners of great estates because they threatened to achieve some success in their leadership of agrarian movements. Many times, in the western world, whenever property has tended to concentrate in few hands, there have been efforts to divide it up equally, and to make laws that would keep it divided. Agrarianism in the past has been simply the agricultural aspect of this effort.

I am of course aware of the view that agrarianism is merely the agricultural side of the struggle between country and city. But I am enough of a traditionalist to accept the traditional Southern use of the term. Anyone seeking to discover the position of the "agrarians," however, will be doomed to disappointment. For instance, in his essay "Happy Farmers," John Crowe Ransom appears to be an agrarian in the sense that was anathema to the old South. Here he argues the case for the small farmer. He shows the antagonism between him and commercial agriculture, and he argues that the dominance of the latter is being and must be ended. He proposes definite legislation to achieve this aim. The identical argument is elaborated in T. J. Cauley's *Agrarianism*. Several of the essays in the volume *I'll Take My Stand* present a rosy picture of the self-sustaining farm, which, through a thick haze of sentiment, may be recognized unmistakably as another version of the indictment of commercialized agriculture. All of these works call for the establishment of farming as a way of living, not as a way of making money. This is agrarianism, pure and undefiled. Since the plantation system existed primarily for the purpose of making money, since it was not devoted to farming as a way of living but as a way of achieving power, it is no wonder the ante-bellum South detested this radical, equalitarian doctrine.

It is necessary to ask, then, how do the "agrarians" square their views with "the Southern tradition?" I have been able to find no answer to this question.

VIII

In a recent work, *The South Looks at Its Past*, the genteel, moonlight and magnolia tradition is presented as *the* Southern tradition, because, it is said, this is the tradition that prevails in the public mind. The accuracy of the tradition, we are told, does not matter. The important thing is not what the South actually was, but what people think it was. Admittedly, there is much to be said for this view. But who knows what people think the Southern tradition is?

Is it true that the plantation tradition is the dominant one in the public mind? What of the poor white tradition that has been advertised by travelers and historians from the earliest times, and for the past two years and more has been presented every day in the week on Broadway in Mr. Caldwell's fantastic *Tobacco Road*? What of the lynching tradition, and of the idea which seems to prevail that any realistic novel or movie about the South must include murder by a raving mob? Ideas of poor whites and of lynching probably come to the minds of people thinking of the South far more than any other ideas. Can either of these truly be said to be *the* Southern tradition? The idea is as absurd as is the adoption by Southern "agrarians" of the abolitionist notion of an unprogressive old South.

It is impossible, then, to speak of *the* Southern tradition in this sense and convey meaning that is not grossly ambiguous. Is there any way in which the phrase can have a legitimate use? Let those who have appealed to it so frequently give us their answer.



## THE DICTATORSHIP OF NAPOLEON THE FIRST

KARL LOEWENSTEIN

### I

**D**URING the brief span of ten years, from 1789 to 1799, political life in France had passed through heaven and hell. After the downfall of the feudal régime, the lofty ideals of the eighteenth-century philosophers were tried in practice, but the notions of equality, liberty, and justice were swept away by Jacobin terror. The Revolution devoured its own sons. Montesquieu's conception of the constitutional state was destroyed by Rousseau's radical democracy. In turn, the parliamentary dictatorship of the Convention was replaced by the moderate but weak and inefficient government of the Directory tantamount to political anarchy. Concomitantly with political change in this period, society and social life had undergone a profound transformation. By the confiscation of the property of the church and the nobles a huge transference of wealth had produced new strata of property-owners who were threatened with submergence in the economic chaos of the state. Moreover, a nation shattered to its foundations was at war against coalitions of the most powerful monarchies of Europe intent upon checking the revolutionary contagion lest it might spread over the borders.

When the military genius of his age, the thirty-year-old general Napoleon Buonaparte, since Arcole and Rivoli the hero of his nation, returned from Egypt for the conquest of his adopted country, he was greeted as the savior of France. The bourgeoisie and the masses of the peasants who had benefited most from the Revolution were willing to follow the man of destiny who promised them stability of the new social order. Politically they were wholly apathetic and desired nothing but peace and a modest enjoyment of life. After ten years of superhuman strain, France was utterly exhausted and ready to abdicate political self-determination for a strong

government securing public order and economic safety. Napoleon appeared as the embodiment of revolutionary achievements. Dictatorships frequently emerge from political chaos and mental exhaustion of the people.

In preparing the way for Napoleon, the shadowy figure of Emmanuel-Joseph Siéyès, a man of cold intellectualism, widely experienced on the political stage, though by nature incapable of action, was the astute wire-puller behind the curtain. Napoleon, however, was unwilling to assume the simulacrum of real power assigned to him in Siéyès's artificial scheme of governmental reconstruction. The articles of the constitution of the year III providing for a constitutional revision were so complicated that only a violation of the constitution could overcome the legal obstacles. Therefore the access to power was sought by a coup d'état—the first of many to come—with the connivance of at least some influential members of the Directory. The pretext of a Jacobin revolt—the “red menace scare”—served its purpose well. The well-known events at St. Cloud on Brumaire 18th (November 9, 1799) present a variety of crude illegalities. Napoleon took the oath on a constitution to be broken by him a few hours later. After sixty-one of the opposition deputies had been arrested, a rump parliament of a fraction of the members of the Conseil des Cinq Cents, hastily convened, swore in the provisional government. The consuls Napoleon Buonaparte, Siéyès, and Roger Ducos were constituted as the new masters of France. Thus at least the pretense of legality, which is a priceless asset for the dictator in the making, was maintained. On the whole, the coup d'état of Brumaire 18th was poorly planned and badly executed. Dictatorships, however, are usually created no less by the weakness and lack of resistance of the old powers than by the strength of the dictator. Yet Napoleon's political skill finally succeeded in setting up a constitutional scheme serving as a springboard for the ultimate goal of monocratic powers.

The Caesaristic dictatorship of Napoleon the First may be roughly divided into two periods, the first of which reaches

from Brumaire 18th to the establishment of the Empire (May 18, 1804). It reveals clearly the methods by which the dictator wins and maintains absolute powers against the forces of the existing opposition. During the second period, extending from the accession to the throne to the exile of the Emperor at Elba, the student of this classical pattern of dictatorship may observe how, having eliminated organized opposition, the dictatorial government was operated in practice. The short-lived interlude between the return of Napoleon from Elba and the finale at Waterloo, the famous Cent Jours which added a modicum of liberalization to the absolute government of the Empire, shall not be discussed in this study for lack of space, although it illustrates the fact that any dictatorial government which admits free expression of public opinion rings its own deathknell.

Experience shows that dictatorial government usually does not attain the summit of unlimited power by one bold stroke. On the contrary, it proceeds slowly and step by step with the object in mind of remaining within the limits of legality and thereby winning public opinion for the new order until the régime is strong enough to hold on without the support of, or even against, public opinion. Napoleon followed carefully this realistic line of political psychology. During the first period, generally known as the Consulate, Napoleon enacted not less than three different constitutions, namely: the constitution of the year VIII (1799/1800), the *Senatus Consultus* (S. C.) of Thermidor 16th, X (August 4, 1802), which transformed the decennial Consulate into a life-time appointment, and the constitution of the S. C. of Floréal 28, XII (May 18, 1804), by which the Empire was established. Each instrument of government grew logically out of the preceding one, each one marked a further step toward the attainment of absolute and unimpaired power. Every single one of the provisions of these constitutions was carefully planned by Napoleon himself with the collaboration of his intimate helpers under his direction, and there is substantial evidence that at least the constitutions of the years VIII

and XII were dictated by him personally, thus revealing the supreme warlord of his age as an eminent constitutional lawyer.

To one who reads only the texts of these three constitutional documents, without duly considering their operation in practice, it might appear that the original institutions as laid down in the constitution of the year VIII had undergone comparatively little change. Yet, by shifting almost imperceptibly real powers from one organ of the state to another, he achieved what his masterful mind had designed from the beginning. By destroying the separation of powers and by eliminating rival influences of other constituted agencies, he monopolized political power in his hands alone. The deliberate ambiguity and shrewd complexity of the original institutional scheme greatly facilitated his initial plan. He realized that no organ of the state which lacks responsibility wields real power. Thus, by a process of constitutional emasculation of the competitive agencies, he succeeded in vesting the political ascendancy exclusively in his person.

The constitution of the year VIII provided for a government of the three consuls, among which Napoleon was the First by fact and title, and an intricate variety of legislative and consultative bodies, namely the Senate, and the bicameral legislative branch in the proper sense of the term, consisting of the Tribunat and the Corps Législatif, and finally the Conseil d'Etat. Of these, only the Senate survived as a quasi-parliamentary institution. While the Conseil d'Etat after 1804 became a purely administrative organ, the Tribunat was suppressed in 1807 and the Corps Législatif was reduced to the subordinate and rarely exercised function of a law-recording agency without political importance. By the third year of the Consulate, Napoleon had carried his object of eclipsing all the other parts of the government. He had become a dictator.

In order not to antagonize public opinion, still thoroughly republican, the constitution of the year VIII, a masterpiece of legal obscurity and of intentionally fragmentary character,

paid lip-service to the idea of democracy by keeping up a semblance of popular representation. In practice, however, the representatives were so far removed from effective popular influence that the representative devices were only the façade behind which the government appointed at its pleasure the members of the pseudo-parliamentary assemblies. By introducing the institution of popular representation at all, the framer of the constitution meant to throw dust in the eyes of the republican doctrinaires, and in this he succeeded. On the theoretical basis of universal suffrage of all adult male citizens, a pyramid of three different lists of "notables" was built up, each one rising from the lower one by indirect representation. All citizens registered in the cantonal lists elected one-tenth among themselves as members of the departmental lists, and each of the departmental lists selected again one-tenth among themselves as members of the national list, which, however, was composed only of the most wealthy members of the departmental lists. It is true that membership in all legislative bodies, such as the Senate, Tribunat, Corps Législatif, and even the Conseil d'Etat, was dependent on the qualification as a member of the national list. Access to the legislative assemblies, however, was not gained through election of legislators by the members of the national list, but through nomination from above, in accordance with Siéyès's classical description of Caesaristic government, "*La confiance doit venir d'en bas, le pouvoir d'en haut.*" As the membership in the lists was the only prerequisite for office in the assemblies, any real popular participation was strictly eliminated. Yet the last vestige of popular influence on the "representatives" disappeared in 1802, when the lists of notables were made permanent by life-tenure of the *éligibles* without renewal by election as provided for in the constitution of the year VIII. Furthermore, the government could add members to the lists at its discretion by nomination, and some categories of favorites, such as the soldiers and officers of the Légion d'Honneur, became ex-officio members of the lists. How this ingenious system yielded the results

desired can be understood only in connection with the function of the Senate, to be discussed later. The Senate was the pivot on which the whole constitutional edifice hinged. The national list of *éligibles* served merely as a panel from which the Senate nominated the three hundred members of the Corps Législatif and the one hundred members of the Tribunat. Napoleon, however, appointed the majority of the members of the first Senate and thereby controlled at his will all the other legislative bodies. Thus the idea of popular representation was a crude fraud.

Similarly, the constitutions of the Consulate maintained scrupulously, to the letter, the principle of the separation of powers which, according to the revolutionary tenets, guaranteed individual liberty. Deliberate exaggeration, however, made the principle unworkable in its application. The different departments composing the government were so strictly separated from one another that separation of powers amounted to a paralysis of functions, with the expected result that the impotent pseudo-parliamentary assemblies became mere tools of the dictator. The legislative consisted of no less than three independent bodies, namely: the Senate, to which official rhetorics gave the high-sounding title of "Sénat Conservateur," the Tribunat, and the Corps Législatif, to which properly the Conseil d'Etat, as a fourth legislative organ, must be added. This shrewd "over-organization" could not fail to shift real power to the government, meaning Napoleon the First Consul.

At first legislative bills originated in the Conseil d'Etat. After 1802, however, more and more Napoleon passed the initiative on to a Conseil Privé composed of *ad hoc* summoned friends of the dictator. In conformity with the constitution of the year VIII the bills were discussed but not to be voted on by the Tribunat, and finally voted on, but not discussed, by the Corps Législatif to which the nickname of the *corps de muets* (council of mutes) was rightly attached. The splitting up of the law-making function in initiative, deliberation, and vote by three different bodies in no way con-

nected with each other resulted, together with the nomination procedure for the recruiting of these bodies, in a complete and undisputed ascendancy of Napoleon over the legislative function of the state. Moreover, the Senate in due course became an ordinary law-making body in addition to, and later as a substitute for, the legislative assemblies provided for in the constitution. It will be seen later on that also the judicial branch of the government was completely subordinated to the dictator, who thus concentrated and monopolized all powers in his strong hands.

It would be erroneous to assume that Napoleon accomplished this result at once. A vast amount of political acumen and legal skill had to be devoted to a task which latter-day dictators solved in scarcely so many months as it took years for Napoleon. This is due to the fact that Napoleon encountered, at the beginning of his reign, a strong and at times disquieting opposition in the Tribunat and, though to a lesser degree, also in the Corps Législatif. The members of these assemblies, as we have noted, were nominated by the Senate. While one-half of the first Senate convening early in 1800 were selected and appointed by Napoleon and Siéyès, the other half of the seats were filled by co-optation from the Senate itself. Napoleon was not yet strong enough to commission exclusively such men to the assemblies as were subservient to his will and wish. Men of undisputed talent and political independence gained access. Likewise, for the first Tribunat and Corps Législatif the nominating Senate selected members of revolutionary merits, and not a few of them, especially in the Tribunat, holding liberal and republican views, were opposed to autocratic rule. Napoleon scornfully called the group of intellectuals around Benjamin Constant the *idéologues*, "who ought to be thrown into the water," and he did not rest until he had succeeded in eliminating his adversaries from political life. These men, far from being subservient, felt themselves the representatives of the nation and organized a real opposition. During the Consulate some of the most important legislative measures, such as the first



books of the *Code Civil*, were thrown out by the Tribunat and even by the Corps Législatif. This failure to carry out his intentions induced Napoleon to impose upon the assemblies a legislative *diète* by withholding altogether from them legislative measures. Instead of running the gauntlet of parliamentary discussion, he resorted to government by decree in the form of the expedient *Senatus Consulta*. Moreover, when Napoleon realized that the Tribunat, faithful to its vocation, developed as a center of political opposition against the rising dictatorship, he crushed it completely by a series of constitutional tricks. In 1802, when, in accordance with the constitution of the year VIII, the renewal of one-fifth of the membership of the Tribunat was to be effected, the Senate, utilizing one of the deliberate ambiguities of the constitution, decreed that the retiring members were to be determined not by lot, which presented itself as an impartial method, but by vote of the Tribunat itself whose majority was known to be obsequious. Thus Napoleon was enabled to remove the recalcitrant leaders of the opposition from the assembly, and the new members were recruited from among the creatures of his sovereign will. Furthermore, by a procedural reform of Germinal 10, X (1802), the last traces of public discussion, and thereby of public influence, were obliterated. The Tribunat was divided into three sections which deliberated separately and *in camera* together with members delegated from the Conseil d'Etat. The corporative consciousness of the Tribunat, which thereby became merely an appendix to the Conseil d'Etat, was destroyed, and the Tribunat was stripped of what contact with public opinion had hitherto been preserved. Despite the deathblow dealt to effective opposition, there remained in the Tribunat a critical and hostile, and at times even bellicose, minority of intrepid defenders of liberal ideas, who enraged the dictator to such an extent that, already by the constitution of the year X (1802), the Senate was empowered to dissolve the Tribunat altogether. In 1807 the Senate, on Napoleon's orders, made use of this power and abolished the Tribunat for ever, and

thus what had survived of parliamentary opposition in France was finally wiped out. No notice of this event was taken in public, since a parliamentary institution without political power had forfeited any claim of public attention.

In the Corps Législatif the opposition from the beginning was less obstreperous, although this surviving branch of the legislature, even after 1804, sometimes showed substantial minorities against governmental measures. But its existence was less obnoxious for the régime, because Napoleon, by successive constitutional manoeuvres, had shorn it of all real powers. Its survival after 1804 was due only to the fact that the Emperor needed for his ceremonial proclamations a pompous stage setting of subservient adulators and admirers who, in fact, were abundant in this galvanized corpse of a quasi-parliamentary assembly. Henceforward the Législatif Corps and the Senate served willingly as megaphones for public manifestations acclaiming the dictator, and the mass of meretricious servants in the guise of organs of constitutional government never failed to respond to the demands of their benefactor, who held over them the whiphand of favors and disgrace. During the second half of the Empire, Napoleon resorted, for lawmaking purposes, almost exclusively to decrees enacted by *Senatus Consulta*, or even to simple ordinances prepared by the *Conseil d'Etat* or the *Conseil Privé*, and promulgated under his own authority as *arrêtés* or *décrets*. The Corps Législatif was convened for only two or three months a year. In 1812 it was not once assembled, and in 1813 it was summoned, only to be immediately adjourned. No matters of political implication were left to its deliberation, and the meager list of the agenda reveals more than any constitutional document could do how shadowy the existence of this legislative phantom had become. What the Consulate began, the Empire fulfilled. Since from the outset no political power was vested in the parliamentary institutions, they were never capable of living.

Whereas the powers of the *Tribunat* and the Corps Législatif were subjected to a constant process of restriction, Na-

napoleon heaped more and more functions upon the Senate, the prestige of which was enhanced by each constitutional reform. From the beginning, the Senators were his most obsequious followers and he encountered scarcely any resistance from these quarters, although in its original composition the Senate reflected almost every shade of advanced political opinion, and was by no means devoid of men of intellectual capacity and moral integrity. But by introducing the dignitaries of the realm as ex-officio members in addition to the original members, and by additional Senators of his own selection (up to 120 by S. C. of Thermidor 16, X and S. C. of Floréal 28, XII), he maintained complete control of the Senate, and after 1802 nobody who was not *persona gratissima* with him entered the Palais Luxembourg. Moreover, he lavishly bestowed favors on the already high-salaried Senators, the most notorious of which was the feudalization of the office by the *Senatorie* (1804). This assembly of high officials, noblemen, generals and big landowners, who owed their positions and the various emoluments connected with them to his generosity alone, never failed to comply with his wishes, and even the life-tenure of office did not render them independent from the master's will. As the sessions were *in camera*, the Senate was removed from and not accessible to popular influence. It became more and more what it was intended to be, namely a rubber stamp for his decrees drafted by the Conseil d'Etat or a Conseil Privé, and it ungrudgingly lent a hand to every modification of the constitutional set-up which seemed appropriate to the dictator, thereby playing havoc with its title as *Sénat Conservateur*. By a subtle distinction between constitutional revision on the one hand—to be operated by a plebiscite and the Senate—and supplementary "modifications" or "interpretations" of the elastic clauses of the constitution on the other hand—to be accomplished by the Senate alone—Napoleon manipulated, after Thermidor 16, X, the *pouvoir constituant* at his discretion.

While the emasculation of the ordinary legislative progressed steadily, upon this eminent corporation of servants of

the crown, called the Senate, manifold and important functions were conferred. Among them were the powers to suspend the constitution in any department, to order military conscription, which amounted to usurpation of the constitutional rights of the legislature, to dissolve the legislative assemblies and to cancel judicial decisions of the ordinary courts. While preserving the semblance of a legalized procedure, the Senate was in fact a creature of the almighty will of the dictator. Since the *Senatus Consulta* were recognized as constitutionally enacted laws by the *Cour de Cassation*, they covered any violation of the elastic constitution. The attitude of the Senate was not guided by fixed rules of general application but by the *raison d'état* formulated and dictated by Napoleon's sovereign will. Under the twilight of the consular constitutions, Napoleon needed considerable caution to hide his dictatorial ambitions behind a curtain of quasi-constitutional devices, while after the establishment of the Empire the powers of the dictator, no more fettered by constitutional limitations, became absolute in the full legal sense of the term. From the outset the Senate was faithful to its mission as a pliable instrument of dictatorship. Napoleon knew and despised the vanity of human beings, and by lavishly bestowing favors and emoluments on the creatures which his will could make and undo, he kept the selfish Senators, among them Siéyès, in deference to his political game. Not more than six Senators were openly hostile to the re-establishment of the monarchy, and the senatorial commissions for the individual liberty and for liberty of the press, by which the imperial constitution of 1804 came to meet the rising liberal demands of the country did practically nothing to comply with their duties. After 1806 no trace of opposition in the Senate is recorded.

## II

In analyzing the mechanism of Napoleon's dictatorial government, we must always bear in mind that the dynamic force of his régime was the powerful personality of the dictator, who created and shaped the governmental forms suitable to his

unique genius. In the field of modern government, however, personality must be converted into a tangible mechanism by which government actually is operated. It should be investigated, therefore, by which technical devices he was able to exercise undisputed control over government and administration of so vast an empire which incessantly extended its borders. It is obvious that even a Napoleonic master mind was utterly incapable of handling the details of the administrative machinery himself, and the problem becomes all the more stupendous when we realize that during more than half of his reign he was absent from France leading his armies over the battlefields of Europe. Thus, for the student of constitutional phenomena, the relationship between the dictator and his collaborators is perhaps the most interesting aspect of dictatorial régime.

From this angle, Napoleon's rule is clearly divided into two periods. During the first, which extends not further than 1802, the dictator sought and took advice, and French historians properly termed this section of his reign as *le régime consultatif*. From 1802 to 1814 Napoleon dictated in the plain sense of the word; he gave orders to his subordinates which were blindly executed. This period is adequately called *le régime personnel*. It might appear inconsistent with the conceptual essence of dictatorship that the autocratic ruler follows advice because it is usually assumed that, even if he consults informed quarters, only his own decision settles the issue. Yet, during the first years of the Consulate, although Napoleon determined the policy to be adopted, he was mentally still pliable enough to let better counsel prevail. It is true that his colleagues in the Consulate, Cambacérès, the eminent lawyer, and Lebrun, though at all times his useful and faithful *aides de camp*, were only the executory organs of his sovereign will. It was the Conseil d'Etat which rose to become an instrument of collaboration worthy of his genius. Unique in composition and activity, it is perhaps the most efficient advisory body known in modern history, a fact which gives credit as well to the Conseil d'Etat as to its creator.

At the beginning, this assembly of eminent technicians, mostly of the legal profession and of administrative experience in former régimes, had an educating effect on the governmental inexperience of Napoleon and became very often a check on his arbitrariness and rashness. By its moral weight and its intellectual aptitude, the Conseil d'Etat exercised a strong influence on the mind of the young Consul, and by its professionalism, which was wholly devoid of political ambition, it acquired momentum beyond the intentions of the constitution and its maker. Stimulated by his mental vigor, it served as a training ground of administrative insight and governmental technique for Napoleon. In amazingly short time, through co-operation of the collective maturity of the councillors and the organizing vitality of the First Consul, most of the administrative and legislative reforms were achieved which have outlived the Empire.

The Conseil d'Etat was a rather small body of some thirty, later of fifty, councillors, the recruiting of whom, among the best talents of post-revolutionary France, shows the selective genius of Napoleon at its best. After a while, a considerable number of younger men as *auditeurs* and *maîtres de requête* were added. The Conseil d'Etat formed the nucleus of a permanent ministerial bureaucracy for which France was duly envied. This body of experienced specialists was the model of a deliberative parliamentary body without politicians. They acted like a perfect orchestra under the bâton of a first-class conductor, and while almost every one of the players could easily have been a soloist he rose to his full capacity by being a member of the corporative unit. In this circle of eminent administrative experts, Napoleon was decidedly *primus inter pares*, but pupil as well as teacher, bowing to better knowledge, driving his collaborators by his relentless energy, and amazing them by his superlative intelligence. These qualities asserted themselves even in legal matters alien to his predominantly military background. In this private parliament of the First Consul, there was, at least during the first years, enough plain speaking, and after an



animated yet dignified discussion votes were taken, which, even if adverse to the opinion of the leader, usually were binding upon him because of the moral prestige of his advisors.

During the Consulate, the Conseil d'Etat often revealed serious objections to the legislative plans of Napoleon, and he sometimes met so strong a resistance that he was compelled to modify or to abandon his projects, but opposition was prompted solely by non-political motives of objectively contributing to the legislative measures under discussion. In these years, the Conseil d'Etat stands before history as a witness of how useful a body of able and devoted advisers can be to monocratic government without incurring the blame of subservience.

Ranking foremost among the lasting achievements of the Conseil d'Etat were the codification of the French civil and criminal law in the famous *Code Napoléon*, the organization of the courts, and the establishment of the departmental system. To consider only the period between 1800 and 1806, the Conseil d'Etat elaborated not less than 212 laws of general importance and 2,269 local laws, in addition to 16,939 *arrêts*, *décrets*, *décisions*, *avis* and *règlements*, not to mention the countless matters planned, discussed, but not completed.

The Conseil d'Etat reached the *apogée* of influence during the years 1800 to 1802. The constitutional reforms of 1802 and 1804 reduced its power considerably. Napoleon came to apprehend the *esprit de corps* of the Conseil d'Etat, which, incidentally, was divided on the wisdom of the establishment of the Empire, and he showed more and more disinclination to collective deliberation and even discussion. The psychological effects of unlimited exercise of powers made themselves felt. He was increasingly unable to tolerate contradiction and therefore he resorted more and more to law-making by the Senate, which, without opposition, enacted the bills drafted by the Conseil Privé or the ministerial departments. Consequently the activities of the Conseil d'Etat shifted from the legislative to the administrative field, and its



political influence was effaced. With almost unchanged personnel until 1814 and a rising influx of younger talents from among the old ruling classes, it became the keystone of the administrative system for which France is still famous.

Similarly, Napoleon's selective genius asserted itself in the choice of his ministers. Among them the two most distinguished, Fouché and Talleyrand, left him in disgrace before the end of the régime. Others, like Gaudin, the priceless Minister of Finance, or Marat, Secretary of State, served him to the last. As heads of their respective departments, they were responsible to Napoleon alone, and to no assembly. They formed no council of ministers or cabinet and acted in no collective capacity whatsoever. In striking contrast to the Conseil d'Etat, no teamwork was demanded of or permitted to them, no common council is recorded, and Napoleon was his own Prime Minister. Strictly isolated from each other, they were kept in a politically subordinate position towards him, and as mere servants of the crown they were not called to give advice to Napoleon, who tolerated no encroachment on his political monopoly. Political interference led to disgrace and dismissal. The minister was a civil servant and not a political figure, rather a chief of bureau than an administrative leader. Comparatively little change in personnel took place, and during the fourteen years there served not more than thirty-two ministers for eleven ministries. When change was necessary it occurred in the form of transference to another ministry (*chassé-croisé*), not that of a deliberate "change of the guard" in order to give their chance to new men.

In view of the complexity of the administrative machine, and especially of the long absence of Napoleon from his capital, one might wonder why the ministers, most of them able men, did not rise to greater political power. The explanations are manifold: Napoleon strictly confined each one to his specific department, thus depriving him of the opportunity to overlook the whole. He exercised control by playing them off one against the other, by adopting the maxim: *divide et*

*impera*. Jealousy and suspicion were skilfully engendered and fostered for the maintenance of his supremacy, and he treated his highest officials like valets. Most important of all, he shrewdly applied the principle of overlapping powers and of duplicated responsibilities. The functions of the particular department were frequently divided among two independent agencies, one controlling the other; almost every office was doubled or halved by a *Direction Générale*, and even by frequent extraordinary supervision through special commissioners appointed by him from among the Conseil d'Etat. By an intentional application of the principle of *Gémiation*, meaning the juxtaposition of independent offices in the same field, he prevented any one of his ministers from becoming too powerful or irreplaceable. On the other hand, while the administrative system at the basis was unsurpassed in simplicity and uniformity, from this double control and halved responsibility there resulted at the top of the pyramid what has been called by contemporary observers a *morcellement du pouvoir*, largely responsible for the vast amount of "red tape" which since then has entrenched itself solidly in French ministerial bureaucracy. But the result was exactly what the dictator desired. By the rigorous application of the principle of appointment, he had carried his object of eliminating the political competition of rival bodies set up by the constitution. By the application of the system of *Gémiation*, he successfully warded off political competition of the ministers, while the high officials of the bureaucracy were too devoted and much too hard-working to harbor political ambitions. Thus he made the whole administration structure dependent on his personality alone.

The French administrative system, now world-famous, owes its perfection to Napoleon. The bureaucratic authorities, shorn of any participation in the exercise of political power, became most efficient in their own administrative sphere. By substituting nomination for election down to the last official, the influence of public opinion on the administration was barred. The officer was made responsible solely

to his superior who, in his turn, was under the supervision of the minister controlled by the dictator. Bureaucracy grew immensely and invaded every possible field of public life, but it worked like a perfectly constructed machine which the leader alone operated by pressing the button. He gained and maintained control by the maximum of bureaucratic centralization for which the strictly hierarchical subordination within the administration is the technical presupposition. By its very nature, dictatorial government is driven to suppress administrative discretion and freedom, as well as self-government in the municipal and communal field. Likewise, it is obvious that an elective technique for the recruiting of administrative officers, because of the influence of public opinion, is incompatible with dictatorial government. Thus, the idea of hierarchical subordination and control is exactly the opposite of the "leadership principle" operating without control within a definite sphere unless the latter is nothing more than a new label for administrative submission under the hierarchical order of the centralized state. From this viewpoint, Napoleon's administrative system is, in fact, exemplary of dictatorial administration and it is, even if one has to admit that he followed the model set by the *ancien régime*, perhaps the most striking evidence of his genius in political organization.

Napoleon possessed a rare ability in judging men. Only by his inconceivable memory he was able to attend personally to the task of selecting the administrative officers. Scarcely a single one among the higher positions was filled without the candidate being either known to him personally or recommended by someone whom Napoleon knew personally. Those to whom he entrusted the selection of the minor officials, even to the last mayor in the remotest commune, exercised the patronage in the spirit of the master. Talent alone counted and nothing else, and Napoleon weeded out the incompetent mercilessly.

Sociologically two generations of high officials are clearly discernible, namely: the first one, between 1800 and 1807, recruited from among all talents without regard to political

antecedents or social affiliations and chosen solely on grounds of professional efficiency; while in the second generation, entering the service after 1807, social distinctions counted for more, since this latter category of officials consisted mostly of members of the higher bourgeoisie and also of the old nobility. Animated by allegiance to the régime, as well as by personal ambition, the newcomers were scarcely less efficient than the initial set, though perhaps belonging more to the odious type usually identified with bureaucrats. The higher bureaucracy, together with the members of the Legion of Honor, and the military grades, formed the nucleus of the new aristocracy based on merit, not on birth. Their loyalty to the Emperor to whom they owed distinction, privileges, and promotion knew no bounds so long as he was in a position to grant these favors. One realizes, however, how unfavorably this type compares with the Prussian public official of the time who served not a person, but dedicated his life to abstract conceptions of the state and of official duty.

One of the most impressive attainments of the régime in social organization was the departmental system. No dictatorial government can hold on over any length of time unless the administration with which the ordinary citizen comes most frequently in contact is efficient, honest, and free from complaint because of lack of objectiveness. It is arbitrariness in daily life which usually makes dictatorships so offensive to the politically non-interested citizens. The government of Napoleon conformed admirably to these requirements. Napoleon found his most serviceable collaborators in the Prefects, all of whom he selected personally from among the best talent available and only on the basis of administrative ability. The practice of election, which is indispensable for genuine self-government, was wholly abolished, and even the municipal councils were nominated by the Prefect. In his department, the Prefect was a dictator *en miniature*, capable, authoritative, independent, yet subordinate to the central authorities under the direct command of the Emperor. The Prefect as head of the *département* was an administrator as well as the

political agent of the government, and, by this method, centralized control of execution, and hierarchical responsibility in every single one of the widespread ramifications of the administration was guaranteed. No intermediary agency between the Prefects and the central authorities paralyzed or impaired the uniformity of command and execution. Here again Napoleon was far-seeing enough to follow the lines of a deep-rooted French tradition, all the more important for the maintenance of the régime, since impartiality in administration was the result of the strictly applied revolutionary principle of equality before the law. The smoothly working administrative machinery was the indispensable supplement of the political power monopolized in the hands of the dictator.

No dictatorial régime is safe unless the bench is subordinated to the will of the executive. The lever by which this aim was reached was to abolish the immovability of the acting judges and to select carefully the new members of the court. A thorough-going "co-ordination"—even the equivalent expression *marcher au pas* is found in contemporary sources—was accomplished, thus obliterating the last vestige of the separation of powers which free constitutions consider as guarantee of personal liberty. Election of judges survived only in the Justices of Peace; all other judges were appointed by the government. While a strict hierarchy of the inferior courts under the appellate courts, and of the appellate courts under the Cour de Cassation was established, the government retained supreme control in nominating the members of this Supreme Court through the Senate on the designation of the Emperor. On the other hand, the Ministry of Justice under the *Grand Juge* (Régnier) provided for uniformity and homogeneity in the operation of the judicial system. Independence of judges was severely curtailed by the power of the Senate to cancel judicial decisions *attentatoires à la surété de l'Etat*. A famous Senatus Consultum by which the Senate on Napoleon's order nullified an acquittal by the jury of Antwerp (1813) bears witness to how the Senate used this power. Likewise, the Senate, at the instigation of the dictator, could

and did, by a suspension of the constitution, suspend for the time being trial by jury, thus cutting the last ties between the people and the administration of justice. The independence of the bench was gravely impaired, since the judge had to be a member of the list of notables and could be removed by striking him off the list on demand of the government. Moreover, by the S. C. of October 12, 1807, a senatorial committee thoroughly purged the judiciary from politically unreliable members, and aspirants had to undergo a five-year probation before their final appointment. In 1810 a new purge followed, to the effect that the bench was entirely subjugated. From the beginning, the Cour de Cassation sustained decrees and *Senatus Consulta* as constitutional. On the other hand, it must be noted that administration of civil justice under the new codes was, on the whole, competent, efficient, impartial, and honest.

By similar devices of control and discipline, the *parquet* (Public Prosecutor) and the *office ministériel* were regimented, and even the free profession of the lawyers, mouth-piece of public conscience, was domesticated; the *avocats* forever encountered the hearty dislike of Napoleon.

For the contemporary observer, perhaps the most significant feature of the régime was the bureaucratization and regimentation of the entire social life, which in many respects assumed proportions to be qualified in modern times as "totalitarian." A huge bureaucracy interfered with every aspect of social and economic life. Industry and commerce were subjected to a meticulous system of regulations which, however, was justified in part by the implications of the continental blockade depriving many industries of their sources of raw materials and of their markets. To a greater extent, however, the inexorable law of dictatorial administration asserted itself, namely, that the dictatorial state is invariably driven to interfere with the entire social life of the community. Hence the over-organization, the mushroom growth of bureaucracy, which very often was not a means to an end but became an end in itself. Extension of state activity naturally breeds

officialdom. It is interesting to note that even the first elements of a corporative state appear. Moreover, the vast bureaucratic machinery served the political purpose. By creating new offices, the number of those who were dependent on the régime was aggrandized and they therefore became its staunch supporters. Thus the inflation of the administrative personnel fortifies dictatorships, and by this subtle application of patronage or spoils the great mass of minor officials is bound to support the existing government from which they derive their livelihood.

A typical example is afforded by the *Université Impérial*, by which the entire educational system of France was brought under the supervision of the government. Education was made uniform, and even the spirit became an object for bureaucratization. The state, constituting the *corps enseignant*, claimed the monopoly in education. Its salient features were the militarization of the curriculum and the bureaucratic over-organization, strangling the free development of the spirit. In this, as in many other aspects, modern dictatorships seem to have copied many a page from Napoleon's book.



## WHAT FRAME OF REFERENCE, PLEASE?

T. SWANN HARDING

NOT SO many years ago it was one of the functions of a good host skilfully to prevent arguments about religion and politics. If these dangerous topics were approached the diplomatic host adroitly diverted the conversation into quite other channels.

In those days, of course, conversation was much more frequent at parties than it is these days with bridge so popular. But there still are peculiar old fossils who hold occasional parties at which the guests are expected to converse. Today the topic to be avoided concerns the philosophies, acts, and intentions of European governments.

The other night there was such a party and the host proved incapable of performing his tutelary function of diverting the conversation into less provocative channels. Perhaps, indeed, he liked to hear arguments, for at least he did not participate. The results were interesting and, fortunately, without casualties.

The catastrophe, like most inexplicable events of malignant nature, took place suddenly and with little warning. Some one present merely said that Gertrude Stein had made one intelligent statement since she came to the United States, to wit: The persons killed by the Communists are just as nice as those killed by the Hitlerites. Then some one else remarked that after all a purge was a purge whether in Russia, Germany, or Austria.

That started trouble immediately. For the young Russian present, who proved to be a Communist, at once gave in elaborate form (and with endless interruptions) the official explanation offered by the Soviet government for its recent purge. Then the German lady present recited, also with innumerable interruptions, the official German and Austrian explanations of the Hitler purge and of the Dolfuss attack on the Vienna Socialists.

It began to appear that a purge was not just a purge. It depended upon the dictatorship which engineered the purge. Yet, oddly enough, the Russian Communist found the actions of the German and the Austrian governments very reprehensible, and the German lady found those of the Soviet government absolutely indefensible.

Then a Jew who was present said: "Nevertheless, a purge is a purge. It is a necessary function of any dictatorship to rid itself violently ever so often of enemies who appear to menace its stability. I am a Jew, but I do not blame Hitler for anything he may have done to Jews. Every dictatorship must oppress some one and, given their views, the followers of Hitler are perfectly right in being harsh with Jews.

"It is true I could not live comfortably in Germany, perhaps, but neither could I in Soviet Russia, because my views are such that I would soon get into trouble with dogmatic Communists. If I had to choose, I would choose Russia rather than Germany, but better than all I prefer Great Britain, France, or America where the political forces at work are such as to prevent a dictatorship and thus give maximum freedom to the individual."

Meanwhile another young guest became agitated because the Russian Communist present was a scientist, a man who followed scientific method in his laboratory researches. Yet here he was affirming uncritical faith in an official paper of the Russian government written merely to put the best possible light on a presumably unavoidable series of executions. Why didn't scientists bring scientific method out of the laboratory and use it in everyday life?

The answer is that scientific method, like Hitlerism, Communism, and the old sectarian religious beliefs of earlier days, is a frame of reference. This term is purloined from modern physics. A very simple illustration, often used to explain what it means, may be used here for that purpose.

You are in a moving railway coach. You arise from your seat and walk towards the rear of the car. You are in motion now in which direction? Another man sitting in the same

coach says that you are obviously moving due north at a slow pace. Given his frame of reference, the coach, this is true. But a man standing on a station platform watching the train go by would, if he could see you, say that you were moving due south at nearly sixty miles an hour.

Both statements are true, given the frame of reference from which they were made. Now another train appears beside yours. It is going due south almost as fast as yours, say as fast as yours less the rate of motion at which you are walking north in the coach. To a person on that train it would appear that you were not moving at all. You would seem to be standing still, just lifting your feet up and down.

If you could be seen by a man on Mars or on some distant star it might appear to him that you were simply moving away into space at some vast and incredible speed and it would be quite true for him to assert this. Each of the four observers states the truth, granting his frame of reference. You should not call any of them wrong until you ascertained and allowed for the nature of that frame of reference.

Modern physics has changed the nature of space, matter, and energy greatly. It holds that space is one sort of thing in one part of the universe and quite different in other parts. Locally it appears that space permits us to draw straight lines which neither meet themselves coming back nor perform other miracles that are common in other frames of reference. In the vicinity of earth only one straight line may be drawn through a single point parallel to another straight line.

But in other parts of the universe space is all crinkled up and crooked. Straight lines meet themselves coming back. What we would call parallel lines cross each other or go off at tangents. In some cases you can draw as many parallel lines to another straight line through a given point as you care to draw; in other cases (as indeed on the surface of the earth or any other globe) you can draw no parallel lines at all—in the sense that they will not eventually meet—and so on.

Another peculiar thing is that the nature of space in any part of the universe is determined by the number and kind

of objects in that particular vicinity. Yet, on the other hand, the characteristics of objects (matter) are determined by the kind of space in their vicinity. The qualities of all objects are thus determined by their frames of reference.

Matter is so abundant in some cosmic regions that space gets all crinkled up and buckled together. Straight lines then run off at tangents or else meet each other and cross numerous times. Cubes become rhomboids. In some places you can draw an infinite number of parallel lines to a straight line, through a given point; in other regions you can not even draw one such parallel line.

It is easy to imagine how confused an object must get when it wanders into strange vicinities in space. The vicinity promptly becomes its frame of reference. It acts in accord with the conditions determined for and in such a frame of reference. Whereas, a moment ago, it declared itself a cube, now, in an entirely different frame of reference, it insists that it is still a cube though it appears rhomboidal.

You insist upon that. You know it is no longer a cube. You know this, however, because you are still in the old frame of reference. If you also could step over into the new frame, special conditions in that vicinity would make you all squeegee too, and you would begin to leer from the side of your crooked mouth that the cube was not a rhomboid but just a cube after all!

Leaning like the Tower of Pisa, you would also insist that you were an upright citizen, forgetful of the fact that people still in the old frame of reference vacated by you could not regard you as upright. Hence, whatever you think about morals, politics, or the rightness of things in general depends absolutely upon your frame of reference and the initial assumptions or premises it compels you to make. If you changed your frame of reference you would necessarily change your assumptions and think like those in the new frame.

For there are mental, biological, economic, and political frames of reference just as there are physical frames. There are any number of things believed true by laymen which

scientists do not regard as true simply because they work in a different frame of reference and make absolutely different fundamental assumptions to start with. As the French have long said, to understand all is to forgive all.

Many bitter words have been spoken because President Wilson said that we were too proud to fight and declared in his campaign speeches that he should be reelected because he had kept us out of war and would continue to maintain peace. Yet he subsequently most certainly did put us into war and, it now appears, considered doing this much before his campaign. But he almost certainly spoke honestly about the matter on every occasion, given his frame of reference.

So when one candidate for office contradicts another, when one says that is good which the other declares evil, the candidates should not be condemned as insincere. They both mean what they say and are quite honest. They merely speak from entirely different frames of reference in which their initial assumptions must necessarily be different. Both are perfectly right, given their frames of reference, though one will always appear wrong when viewed from the frame of reference occupied by the other.

Take an example from biology. A layman states that tablets containing vitamins A and D prevent colds and respiratory infections and are a general tonic. A physician states that vitamin tablets are simply bunk and are of no value at all in medicine. We investigate. What are the respective frames of reference?

The layman reads and believes certain advertisements; his beliefs are reinforced by the fact that a cold once disappeared while he was taking the tablets or because he had no colds one winter while he took them. The physician has tried vitamin A and D tablets on a number of patients and could in no case discern any favorable result. Then enters the scientist.

The scientist says that vitamin A and D tablets are useful, under certain circumstances. They will neither cure nor prevent colds or respiratory infections in human beings. Carefully controlled experiments with tablets tested on rats for

their potency have shown that. The brand of tablets used by the physician does not, however, contain any appreciable amount of either vitamin.

The scientist, you see, does not speak from chance personal experience. His frame of reference is a complex technic which enables him to be intelligently critical. His initial assumptions are made with extreme care and, in building upon them, he tests everything and proceeds with the utmost caution. He is objective, detached, and impersonal. To be sure, he personally makes experiments, but only under careful control. He uses the results of those experiments unemotionally and impersonally.

When the scientist begins to consider problems in other fields, however, he walks out of his scientific frame of reference. He may do this so slyly that he himself does not realize the fact. Whereas he would not accept the statements of any layman or in any advertisement without subjecting them to severe critical analysis, he may accept the official explanation offered by some government to explain the shooting of certain enemies of state.

A man may be a wild and heady liberal. He is made so by his frame of reference. The fact that he secures a position on the staff of a radical or liberal journal tends to accentuate his liberalism. It reënforces the potency of his frame of reference and thus subtly reconditions his conduct and entire mental outlook.

Then by good fortune he gets an excellent job on the staff of a newspaper. This paper is rather conservative by nature. Very gradually he begins quite sincerely to believe and to write things that he would have regarded as criminally reactionary in his earlier environment. Now he tends to see things as they are in this new frame of reference. He is still honest, upright, and, he feels, liberal.

To his old associates, however, he appears lacking in ethics, moral decency, and intellectual integrity. But they are wrong. It is true that he, as an object in space, does have his small part in determining the nature of his frame of refer-

ence. But his frame of reference in very much larger measure determines what he is to be, what he shall say, what action he may take.

We may turn to fiction for evidence of this truth. The hero of *Lust for Life* quite imperceptibly became an utterly different person in morals and habits, depending upon his environment and associates. It is so with all of us. We deplore certain actions of certain people. We say that we could not possibly do such things under any circumstances. Then come certain conditions in our own lives, and we wake up some day to find ourselves doing exactly what was done by those we condemned. Our actions appear, however, right and justifiable to us. Why? Because we see them in consonance with our new frame of reference. Others who judge us from other frames of reference find us as wicked as certain friends and relatives of Van Gogh found him.

In Sudermann's *Song of Songs* the heroine, who was anything but a conventional sort of person in her sexual entanglements, finally fell sincerely in love. The proximity of this new, vibrant body in her immediate portion of space so changed her frame of reference—and necessarily herself—that she sat down one night to write her lover a letter in which she was to tell him the absolute, unadulterated truth about her frightfully complicated past career.

She wrote not one letter but several. However, they were not only mutually contradictory, but not one of them was true! Whether she portrayed herself as innocent and imposed upon by others, as deliberately and maliciously wicked, or as a little of both, she could not, it seemed, tell the simple truth. So she decided to go to her lover and tell him the truth. It was raining dismally and she arrived far after midnight.

The lover was a conventional chap with a meticulous landlady. But she forced an entrance over his protestations and entered upon the task of telling him the true story of her past. It was a complete failure. The exact truth eluded her. She could not re-create her own self as she had appeared in earlier frames of reference and thus deal equitably and honestly with



her past. So she gave up and began to live with her new lover without further ado, this, in the end, proving about as disastrous as anything she could have told him.

So when a politician or an office-holder denies one day what he said the day before, consider his frame of reference. Yesterday he may have spoken after intimate association with a group of liberal or radical thinkers; these animate bodies ironed out his mental space and made his frame of reference such that he became clear, straight, simple, and direct. Liberal and radical space always tends to be that way. It is full of direct, straight lines which dutifully connect any two desired points and go resolutely on their way regardless of obstacles. Such space is heroic in mold.

But today things are very different. Bodies of great magnitude have appeared—bankers, brokers, business men, and manufacturers. The official's space has, in consequence, become warped, crinkled, and irregular. In this sort of space the straightest lines cross and recross each other in intricate and sinister patterns, and upright parallel lines change into interlocking directorates. Powerful forces have their play here. So the official speaks from this frame of reference.

What he says is, from your naïve point of view, a diametrical contradiction of what he said yesterday. But remember that yesterday you and he were in the same frame of reference. Today he has moved out. Do not judge him uncritically, or too harshly. Instead try, if you can, to step over into his new frame of reference. Immediately you will be pleasantly surprised to discover that what he says is not only true and wise, but that what you yourself say and write agrees absolutely with what he says and writes.

You are both right today. You were both right yesterday. What we want is not honest men in public life, but some sure mechanism by means of which we may control frames of reference. If we can not control them we must understand them. This means understanding that Hitler and Stalin were both right, and so were Mussolini and Dolfuss.

Certain factors and forces—individual, psychological, eco-

nomic, political, and even scientific—operate in every society. They are in constant play. Their complex adverse motions are resolved into what we call government, a resolution that tends to give them the appearance of unity, purpose, and definite direction. This balance of forces is always delicate. Its tenure of existence is always precarious. At times the balance is such that a dictatorship results. This may be of longer or shorter duration.

A dictatorship necessarily produces its own frame of reference, but the frame is very similar whether the dictatorship is *pro forma* communistic or fascistic in theory. Unlike more democratic forms of government which provide for peaceful re-directing of the balance of power, the dictatorship is static. Hence, enemies of the constituted government can not be permitted to speak their minds and promulgate and propagandize their beliefs. They must be dealt with summarily.

All dictatorships, of whatever kind and regardless of the theories they espouse, find it necessary every once in a while to execute some enemies. To save face this mass execution must be explained in as plausible a way as possible. But, mark it, those who pronounce sentence of execution and those who explain the necessity for this violence, are honest and good, given their frame of reference, allowing for their initial assumptions, and assuming the premises from which they start to reason.

But we are foolhardy who, without sharing their frame of reference, dare question or criticize their acts adversely. When we judge them we judge on a basis of our own frame of reference, our assumptions, our emotions, and our premises. A purge, per se, is neither evil nor good; it is a mere part of dictatorship. Once dictatorship molds the frame of reference, occasional mass violence is bound to occur at intervals.

The orthodox Communist who finds Hitler's purge anathema and the follower of Hitler who finds Stalin's purge criminal, err merely by judging others from their own frames of reference. The official explanations made by the respective governments should be the bases of judgment. For these state

the assumptions of the government and the frame of reference within which it functioned. Possibly summary execution is as right in Germany or in Russia as lynching is in one of our Southern states. More than probably education could be so used as to change the balance of forces in each case and to produce a frame of reference wherein summary execution would not occur.

A doctor friend of mine acts as oculist at a great prison. Among other things he fits glasses to criminals serving life terms for murder. He has talked on a basis of friendly intimacy with two or three dozen murderers. In doing so he has trained himself gradually to accept their frame of reference, to see things as they see them. He tells me that he finds "justifiable homicide" in every case. In other words, he could easily imagine himself committing the same murders, given the same circumstances.

He admits that this is a heady sort of doctrine but asks—what can you do about it? Fortunately no wife seems likely to nag him into murdering her. He feels quite free from homicidal impulses. He also manages to remember that he is a man on a platform watching a train go by and that the man facing the rear of the coach is really walking in a direction opposite that of the train.

This, after all, is the main thing—to remember our own frame of reference. That is what a scientist does. He spends a great deal of time perfecting his tests, his methods, and his criteria of judgments. He defines his frame of reference with the greatest care. Then he proceeds with and accepts the results of his experimentation quite objectively. In the same way he examines the methods of another scientist and accepts his results on that basis. But let any of us get over into some crinkled space and there is no telling what we would do. We might be as ruthless as a European dictator.

## CAN THE UNITED STATES MAINTAIN NEUTRALITY?

J. FRED RIPPY

FEW subjects have provoked more discussion in the United States during the last two years than the subject of our ability to keep out of a general European war, and few questions have stimulated the flow of a more constant stream of articles and books from the press.<sup>1</sup> Some writers still advocate the entrance of the United States into the new régime theoretically envisaged by the framers of the Covenant of the League of Nations—a régime of collective action against the "guilty" in which neutrality could not exist. But those who urge that the United States should maintain an isolated or largely isolated neutrality are far more numerous and articulate.

If the belligerents were small, weak nations, or even larger and more powerful nations without considerable sea power, the question posed in this paper could be answered unhesitatingly in the affirmative. A war confined to Paraguay and Bolivia, to Argentina and Brazil, or to Bulgaria and Roumania, for instance, would not be likely to involve the United States. But when such nations as England, France, Germany, Russia, and Japan are at war, an affirmative answer becomes doubtful and even hazardous.

<sup>1</sup> Among these works the following are perhaps the most significant: Walter Millis, *Road to War* (Boston and New York, 1935); Charles Seymour, *American Neutrality, 1914-1917* (New Haven, 1935); Allen W. Dulles and Hamilton Fish Armstrong, *Can We Be Neutral?* (New York, 1936); Phillip C. Jessup, Francis Deak, W. Alison Phillips, Arthur H. Reede, and Edgar Turlington, *Neutrality, Its History, Economics and Law* (4 vols.; New York, 1935-1936); Phillips Bradley, *Can We Stay Out of War?* (New York, 1936).

Those interested should consult *The Reader's Guide* for the numerous recent articles on the subject of neutrality, but the present writer must refer to those of Frederick L. Schuman (*The Nation*, Feb. 12, 1936) and Charles A. Beard (*The New Republic*, March 4, 11, and 18, 1936).

Three other works, not written with the present crisis exclusively in view, are: Frank H. Simonds, *American Foreign Policy in the Post-War Years* (Baltimore, 1935); Ray Stannard Baker, *Woodrow Wilson: Life and Letters* (Vol. V; Garden City, N. Y., 1935); Charles Seymour, *American Diplomacy During the World War* (Baltimore, 1934).

If history may be relied upon as a teacher, the answer in cases where such great powers are concerned would appear to be an unequivocal "No!" For this nation has become involved in the only two wars of this general nature which have occurred during the century and a half of its existence.

More than a century ago, at a period when we were governed by our greatest statesmen, and when our pacific and isolationist impulses were very strong, the United States was unable to avoid embroilment in the Napoleonic Wars. The historian of that epoch may discover four factors which swept us into the maelstrom: (1) the unwillingness of merchants to pay the price of isolation and peace by submission to the embargo and non-intercourse; (2) the desire of aggressive Westerners and Southerners for the acquisition of territory belonging to England (Canada) and her Spanish ally (Florida); (3) strong sympathy for France and latent hostility toward England; and (4) perhaps a national pride which would not brook further interference with what we conceived to be our rights.<sup>2</sup>

A hundred years later, under the administration of another able statesman devoted to the policy of neutrality and peace, the United States again became involved, embroiled in a catastrophe far more destructive than even the terrible Napoleonic Wars. And once more the historian is beginning to understand why the United States failed to escape the catastrophe: (1) land-hunger was not a motive, but there was a strong desire for the profits of commerce, including the traffic in arms and munitions, as well as for commissions and investments; (2) there existed a genuine apprehensiveness with reference to the possible future policies of a victorious and dominant Germany as well as a deep resentment aroused by German methods of warfare; (3) our sympathy for France and England was strong; and (4) our national pride was again involved. Since all four of these factors were operating against the maintenance of neutrality and peace, it would not

<sup>2</sup>For a good discussion of the difficulties of this period, see Louis Martin Sears, *Jefferson and the Embargo* (Durham, N. C., 1927). Consult also Julius W. Pratt, *The Expansionists of 1812* (New York, 1924).

be strictly accurate to assert that the United States was pushed into the war because the nation was not willing to pay the material price of staying out. Yet such an assertion would seem to contain a large element of truth, for in general the controlling influences in the United States preferred profits to peace and eventually obtained the enthusiastic support of the people.

The recent revelations<sup>a</sup> of the Nye Committee throw a flood of light on this phase of the subject. The first few weeks of the war made it clear that our trade would be affected—and increased, but they also seemed to make it desirable to grant loans to the Allies. The Morgan Company asked whether there would be any objection to loans to France, and W. J. Bryan, secretary of state, after consultation with President Wilson, declared: "Loans made by American bankers to any foreign nation which is at war are inconsistent with the true spirit of neutrality."

Months passed, and then it appeared that a crisis was at hand. The purchasers of our goods needed short-term credits and needed them badly. "No bankers' credits for belligerents, a slowing down of their buying. A drop in buying, a loss of business. A loss in business, falling demand, prices, wages, employment, and profits, assuming that nothing else could be done." Robert Lansing, counsellor of the State Department, called on President Wilson, apparently behind the back of Secretary Bryan. Wilson and Lansing discussed the difference between temporary credits to facilitate exchange and long-term loans. Lansing received the impression that the President thought such matters ought not to be submitted to the government of the United States, and Wilson seems to have authorized Lansing to submit this impression to the bankers with the express understanding that it was Lansing's own private impression! Lansing was not to speak for Wilson when he conveyed the impression to the bankers; he was to speak only for Lansing, a mere subordinate in the

<sup>a</sup> Until all of the hearings of this committee are officially published, we must depend on the newspapers and periodicals for its revelations.

State Department! Lansing conferred with the bankers; the short-term credits were extended.

This was the end of October, 1914. By August, 1915, another financial crisis threatened. Short-term credits were being stretched to the limit. "The President of the United States was informed by bankers and official advisers (Lansing, now secretary of state, and W. G. McAdoo, secretary of the treasury, among them) that a domestic crash would come if the huge debts created by the credits he had obliquely approved in October, 1914, were not funded. . . . Having taken the [first] step [regarding short-term credits] . . . to prevent a slowing down of business, he must now approve funding these credits and others into American loans to avoid a disastrous slowing down—an economic calamity." Wilson told Lansing that the government of the United States would "take no action either for or against such a transaction." The President shrank from the responsibility of promoting a depression! Lansing was authorized to convey this information indirectly to the bankers, but to do so orally, not in writing! Wilson had often denounced the big capitalists. It was embarrassing now to take their advice. The news speedily reached the interested parties, and the loans were made.

Came then the early spring of 1917. The Tsar's government collapsed; Britain's financial structure threatened to collapse. If the Allies were defeated it would be almost a catastrophe for the United States. "American millions were at stake. What other things were really at stake no one knew."

"But a crisis was there—cold, brutal, remorseless. Economic leaders as well as political leaders, now all entangled in the same fateful web, were under a great strain. The propaganda for American participation in the War increased. Much could be said for it, and was said. Immediate advantage to stake holders were apparent, surrounded by dark shadows of uncertainty. Amid this tension the German government renewed its submarine warfare."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> The quotations are from Beard.



This seemed at the time to be the immediate cause for the American declaration of war. But one cause of this cause was the blockade of Germany by the Allied governments, and another cause of this renewal of unrestricted submarine warfare was our commerce with the Allies, especially our traffic in arms and munitions. If the United States had placed an embargo on arms and ammunition would this submarine campaign have been renewed? Seymour thinks it would. Others are doubtful. And did the United States enter the war against Germany solely because of the submarine issue, or were other motives present: sympathy for France and England, fear of a dominant Germany, wounded *amour propre*, and above all a strong desire to save our investments? The writer is convinced that all of these motives were in operation, not excluding the profit motive.

Many Democrats were enraged when these transactions of Wilson's with the financiers were revealed to the American people nearly twenty years after the event. The humane historian is merely saddened—and discouraged. If Wilson could not withstand these economic pressures coming mainly from masters of finance and captains of industry, but exerted likewise by farmers, merchants, and perhaps laborers as well, shall we ever find another who can? Much will depend on whether we learn any economic lessons from history. Our participation in the war did not save our investments. Granted for the moment that this was our motive, it is illuminating to observe that the cost to date of our attempt to save a little over two billion dollars has been more than fifty-five billion! And before we are through with pensions and bonuses the total may reach a hundred billion as the late President Coolidge predicted. Moreover, the Americans sold the belligerent Allies only seven billion dollars' worth of goods prior to April 1, 1917. Perhaps we may learn from this experience that while a general war may increase the fortunes of a few, it cannot bring profit to the nation as a whole.

At any rate, it now appears that, despite two notable failures, the United States has neither abandoned hope nor re-

laxed its determination with reference to the issue of neutrality. Perhaps at no time in history has a nation been so determined to keep out of a possible war. It was with this purpose in mind that Congress adopted in August, 1935, temporary measures to safeguard the neutrality of this country in face of the conflict between Italy and Ethiopia. And it was with the same end in view that in face of the war-clouds gathering in Western Europe and Asia the original act of 1935 was extended for fourteen months and perhaps somewhat strengthened in February, 1936.

The neutrality law, as re-enacted, not only forbids the sale of arms and munitions to belligerents but also places an embargo on any loans to them. It serves notice, moreover, to American citizens that they will travel on belligerent vessels at their own risk. It does not, however, contain any prohibition against trade with belligerents in excess of the peace-time normal. Neither does it contain any provision with reference to the problem of the increase among neutrals of commerce in goods whose ultimate destination may be a belligerent country. Nor could it furnish any means of preventing the development of sympathies or hostilities with reference to one group of belligerents or the other.

There are not a few who believe that this legislation goes too far, especially in making the embargo on war supplies and loans mandatory for the President. They argue that the matter should be left to his discretion. There might be cases in which loans could be made and arms and munitions sold to the belligerents without involving the United States in the war, or a situation might arise in which the national interest could be served by applying the embargo against one set of belligerents and not the other.

There are also a large number who assert that the legislation does not go far enough. They contend that mandatory restrictions should be placed on non-contraband commerce with belligerents as well as upon trade with neutrals in war zones, or that we should adopt a "cash-and-carry" policy or a

"trade-at-your-own-risk" policy with reference to belligerents and war-zone neutrals.

It is likely that the maintenance of our neutrality and peace at a time when several of the great powers are locked in a death struggle will require more limitations on our commerce than merely the embargo on "arms, ammunition, or implements of war" provided in the neutrality acts of 1935 and 1936. Whether these more rigid restrictions can be enforced only time can reveal.

The United States is by no means as self-contained as many are inclined to assume. In 1914 we produced eighteen commodities which depended on foreign markets for more than ten per cent of their sales. In 1929 twenty-four of our products were dependent for more than ten per cent of their sales on foreign markets. In many instances the percentages of these commodities sold abroad ranged from twenty to sixty: cotton, tobacco, lard, rosin, turpentine, copper, typewriters, heavy machinery, and so forth. And this is only one side of the picture. Imports also must be considered. We must import, for instance, coffee, tea, bananas, cocoa, sugar, rubber, raw silk, and sisal hemp; we depend almost entirely on foreign sources for eight minerals: antimony, chromite, manganese, nickel, tin, asbestos, nitrates, potash; and we are partially dependent on foreign sources for eleven others.<sup>5</sup>

The loss of a considerable portion of our foreign trade has been in no small measure responsible for our depression, and a vigorous effort is being made to recover our external markets. But a general war followed by self-imposed trade restrictions designed to avoid being plunged into hostilities is sure to result in further depression and suffering. This road to neutrality and peace will require rigid discipline and Spartan fortitude.

Nevertheless, in view of the new light which we have on the causes and expense of our embroilment, in view of the possibility of ameliorating our temporary suffering by care-

<sup>5</sup> For a fuller discussion of this phase of the subject, consult my article, "Foreign Markets and the Economic Position of the United States," *The South Atlantic Quarterly*, XXXIV, 15-22 (Jan., 1935).

ful attention to our trade with more than a hundred million people in Latin America (an opportunity which our merchants and diplomats will no doubt make every effort to seize), and in view of what appears to be a thorough determination on the part of the American people, it is not entirely unlikely that such course may be followed, and that it may enable the United States to keep out of the next general war. If, however, we should be involved again as on previous occasions, and if civilization should survive the ordeal, perhaps the participants will be so weakened and chastened that they will resort once more to the League of Nations and make it effective. Perhaps they will then be convinced that world organization is the only alternative to world catastrophe.

# B · O · O · K · S

## DRIVING NATIONS INTO WAR

ROAD TO WAR: *America, 1914-1917*. By Walter Millis. Illustrated. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1935. Pp. ix, 466. \$3.00.

In *The Martial Spirit*, a book which appeared several years ago, Walter Millis showed how a small militant party with the co-operation of yellow journals drove the American people into an undefensible war of acquisition in 1898. With a similar spirit he now traces in *Road to War* the events which entangled the United States in the World War. Refusing to be turned aside by dramatic European incidents or by fine moral points involved in a discussion of war guilt, he unfolds chronologically the story of how the United States became an active participant in the European conflict.

Mr. Millis believes that one of the American peoples' profoundest illusions about itself in 1914 was its belief in its own non-militaristic character. In spite of this illusion, he alleges that Admiral Mahan, Theodore Roosevelt, and General Leonard Wood were possessed with the same spirit as the Kaiser and von Tirpitz. The voluntary citizens' training camps, opened for the first time in 1913, "were designed from the start to be (as their successors still are today) not practical schools of war but seminaries whence propagandists for preparedness might be distributed through the civil population." Thus, he contends, the spirit of militarism was ready to be used for greed or for glory—even for the glory of a war to end all wars.

Appealing to glory instead of greed, he believes the English were infinitely more skillful than the Germans in scattering propaganda in the United States. From headquarters in Canada, Sir Gilbert Parker, a famous English novelist, worked his opinion-forming machine. Free literature was distributed to schools, libraries, and clubs; pro-Ally professors found themselves in demand as after-dinner speakers; English notables suddenly remembered to renew correspondence with old American friends; British authors of first rank condescended to give *gratis* their finest articles to American magazines. As before the war, American newspapers were encouraged to depend upon English journals and reporters for their foreign news. The North Atlantic cables being under the control of England, messages were often garbled, while German officials in the United States were without direct means of communication with their own government after the confiscation of two wireless stations on the New Jersey coast.

Through distorted reports, the English tried to make themselves appear as a peace-loving people who had entered the war in defence of international morality and humanity—more specifically, because Germany had violated the neutrality of Belgium and referred to a solemn international agreement as a scrap of paper. In keeping with this policy Sir Edward Grey, who is credited with great astuteness by Millis, proposed to Colonel House, who appears as little more than a pro-English ninny, that when a military deadlock occurred, Wilson should offer to mediate with proposals of a just peace; that should Germany refuse mediation, the United States ought to participate on the side defending good morals, becoming at the close of war the arbitrator in a just settlement. Mr. Millis believes that Colonel House's peace missions failed to arouse enthusiasm in Germany largely because he went first to London, where he was filled subtly by English diplomats with ideas of a just peace to which they knew Berlin would never consent—that in reality Downing Street did not want peace without spoils.

Despite the Entente proclivities of House and Ambassadors Page, Herrick, and Whitlock, Wilson withstood the temptation to become arbiter of the world for three years. Mr. Millis attributes Wilson's resistance to this temptation largely to lack of egotism. In reality, the explanation lies deep within the President's foreign policy, a policy which Mr. Millis fails to emphasize. Wilson pledged himself not to a course of neutrality through self-restricting embargoes, but to a neutrality which would not surrender the exercise of a single legal right of neutral nations. He believed that to declare an embargo would mean a sacrifice of the principle of the freedom of the seas and would probably lead to war with England. By allowing American trade to continue and protesting against infractions of the law, he was preparing for a settlement of the whole matter at the close of war. Since England was the most constant offender against neutral commerce, Wilson's notes were often written in a tone which made Spring-Rice, British Ambassador at Washington, nervous.

Possessing hindsight, Mr. Millis infers that a strict embargo was the only way the United States could have kept out of war. He describes with warmth the pacifists of the period who were inclined towards such a policy. Secretary of State William J. Bryan was a far-sighted statesman unfortunately ignorant of the technical aspects of his office; La Follette and the other few who voted against war were men of highest courage and foresight; even Henry Ford's peace ship elicits

not a description of the foolhardiness of the venture, but a criticism of the newspapers which scoffed at it. He shows how refusal to adopt an embargo and unwillingness to fight for trade rights gave England a chance to bind the United States to its war chariot by illegal as well as legal methods—a chance of which the English fully availed themselves. He shows how, war being a contest of material resources as well as of men, the United States was actively contributing to the downfall of the Central Powers as early as 1915.

Though Wilson chafed under the illegal restrictions imposed upon neutral commerce by the Allies, he never felt they were as horrible as submarine warfare. The re-adoption of submarine warfare by the Germans, their only way of stopping illegal use of neutral trade by the English, caused the final break in diplomatic relations. It was a case of property against human life in the sight of Wilson, and there was but one answer. Millis rightly points out that the issue was really not so simple, that the English interference with neutral trade caused loss of life in Central Europe. Even so, von Tirpitz, the naval expert, won a Pyrrhic victory when he routed the civil advisers of the Kaiser and inaugurated his program of unrestricted submarine warfare.

Yet one should not judge von Tirpitz harshly, for, even after the dismissal of Ambassador Bernstorff, Wilson seems to have believed America's participation in the war might be limited to armed neutrality. Mr. Millis thinks the Zimmermann telegram was used effectively by the war party in creating opinion favorable to active participation. Instead of leading the people to view the note as a legal effort on the part of Germany to prepare itself in case the United States should declare war, they were made to think that it was a part of a long-planned, nefarious scheme to overthrow American institutions. A large part of the Christian Church began to advocate war against Germany. Seeing no other way out, Wilson reluctantly delivered his war message. With America's entrance into the war, the book closes.

R. L. HILLDRUP.

#### CLASSIC REPORTS

PAPERS ON PUBLIC CREDIT, COMMERCE AND FINANCE. By Alexander Hamilton. Edited by Samuel McKee, Jr. With a Foreword by Elihu Root. New York: Columbia University Press. Pp. xxiv, 303. \$3.00.

Nearly a century and a half ago, in a series of reports to the congress of the United States, Alexander Hamilton gave his principles of government. Bold and farsighted, he saw the importance of "energy in the



administration," and went further than any member of Washington's cabinet in exercising the powers of the Constitution. Now, as at the time when Hamilton wrote his papers, a crisis exists, and in many respects one may find an analysis of our governmental problems in the five essays contained in this volume. One should read the reports of Hamilton—Jefferson's chief political opponent—and then consider Franklin Roosevelt's principles of government as incorporated into the present new deal administration.

Hamilton wrote the five papers now under consideration when he was secretary of the treasury, from September, 1789, through January, 1795. The "First Report on the Public Credit" (January 14, 1790) stresses the importance of an established public credit and points out the advantages of a national funded debt. The second paper, "Report on a National Bank" (December 14, 1790), and the third paper, "Letter to George Washington on the Constitutionality of the Bank with an Analysis of the Powers and Function of the Federal Government" (February 23, 1791), give Hamilton's arguments for a national bank and enunciate the doctrine of implied powers. In the fourth paper, the "Second Report on the Public Credit" (January 16 and 21, 1795), he elaborates on his views on an established national credit as given in the first report and also advocates sinking funds. The "Report on Manufactures" (December 5, 1791) completes the cycle. This report stresses the doctrine of a balanced national economy. It urges aid to agriculture as well as to industry, and suggests government encouragement of industry rather than a laissez-faire policy.

These reports are classic. They are of especial interest now in the light of current administration debates, and thus their publication by Columbia University is a timely contribution. Dr. McKee contributed an interpretative introduction to this volume which he has ably edited, and Elihu Root wrote the foreword. A reading of the work at hand may convince one that these papers contain the exposition of fundamental principles which are pertinent today although they deal with problems of our formative period.

A. A. ROGERS.

#### OF INTEREST TO DOCTORS AND NURSES

DOCTOR MORATH. By Max René Hesse. Translated from the German by Edward Crankshaw. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. Pp. 414. \$2.50.

The whole action and story is laid in Buenos Aires. While there are in that distant city in the Argentine large colonies from non-Latin

countries, the German contingent is not the largest, yet the book would cause the uninformed reader to suppose it to be the most extensive and important of the foreign groups. The author, who has quite evidently lived there, seems not to have found that city's social life outside the German colony. One who does know it in its several phases must believe, then, that the story is, at least, semi-biographical and that the young surgeon who goes to the River Plate from Germany and whose arrival is described in the opening sentences has had no information as to the place he is coming to. A deck companion gives him some idea in the next paragraph. What the man says is hardly just to the greatest city south of the equator and one of the most beautiful in the world. But readers of the book will not realize this unless they have lived in or visited the place. If they have, they will know that the engineer who dilates to Doctor Morath has the usual prejudice against the Latins, "for he had done nothing all the way from Hamburg but regale him (the Doctor) with unpleasant stories about the land and its inhabitants." It was the same, he insisted, with every Latin colony; everything Spanish was rotten with corruption, indifference, and ill-will. A mitigating sentence follows: "Morath laughed at the engineer's bitterness; it was a typically German frame of mind."

And the "frame of mind" continues in some of the descriptions through the book. The expression "the sprawling, sub-tropical town" suggests an ill-kept, unattractive place of rather rank verdure, quite different from the actual appearance of the city. While there are no bluffs from whose height to regard the landscape as the jacket in much too vivid colors presents, the fine high buildings, the broad thoroughfares (beyond the narrower streets of the dock neighborhood), and the activity everywhere indicate at once a great city, whose few old streets are reminiscent of Spanish days when defense was easier in close quarters than on wide boulevards.

Again the expression, "the inhabitants seemed to have strong noses and the brown skin of the Mediterranean provinces," gives a wrong impression of the aspects of ordinary crowds on the streets of Buenos Aires. For these have as indeterminate a racial look as do people thronging the streets of any metropolis—London, New York especially.

The book needs a cast of characters, for the author changes the reader's attention frequently and rather confusingly, and many names of characters are so similar as to keep one uncertain which person is the one meant. One queries if this comes from the translator's interpretation or is from the original construction. Morath, the protagonist,

is more definitely and consistently revealed; the others are made to show up as important only in connection with some happening evidently important merely to themselves. If not badly translated the book has faults of composition that irritate the reader. It is consistent, however, in demonstrating that a man can carry his aims through despite hindrances of many sorts, jealousies—professional and social—and the usual temptations. Doctor Morath is given an experience in sex relation similar to that described of Anthony Adverse but lacking in winning sympathy for the Doctor which the reader is made to feel for the young Anthony. Yet Morath's continued struggle is for justice for the patients whom he wishes to treat as human beings rather than as cases regarded by the other physicians impersonally, unsympathetically. This aspect of his character endears him to the reader. If the author's aim is to show that high principle in professional work is the guiding impulse of the conscientious man under all circumstances he has given the reader that impression of sincerity.

For the rest, some of the descriptions of the amusements of the residents, the horse-racing, the clubs, and private entertaining are well told. If the author wrote his book from personal experiences in the land he did not profit by what he could have seen of English, American, French, Italian colonies, to say nothing of the cultured Argentines than who no people are more charming. The book on the whole will be chiefly of interest to doctors and nurses, for case after case is described with the detail that is even greater than would be written on a "case-sheet." The forcefulness of theme, however, causes one to wish to read another work by this author.

FLORENCE JACKSON STODDARD.

#### IDEAS CONCERNING LITERATURE

LITERATURE AND SOCIETY. By Albert Guérard. Boston: Lathrop, Lee and Shepard Company, 1935. Pp. 451. \$3.50.

No visiting teacher at Stanford University could have failed to notice the success that Professor Guérard has in arousing students to ideas concerning general literature. The public has mostly to content itself with a less personal effect derived from reviews and books by this critic. The present work enables one at a distance to enjoy his adroit wit, his alertness with regard to recent activities in literature, and his shrewd testing of formulas, such as Taine's trinity of race, environment, and time. When the social interpretation of history is all to the fore, it is imperative to have an acute mind run over the ground of

relationship between the arts and sociology, to have it assess, for example, the claims of anthropology. Mr. Guérard examines the nature of both the author, or enigmatic genius, and the interlocutory public. With his background he of course considers the parts played by institutions such as universities, academies, courts, and salons, and yet he very fairly emphasizes the business side of literature. As regards the financial advantages which he attributes to the discussion of books, he might have adduced the increase of sales due to the radio talks of such distinguished commentators as Alexander Woolcott, Harry Hansen, Percy Boynton, and others in different parts of the country. In viewing the future, he is sympathetic with literary experiment, and offers salty and candid criticism of the attitude toward American literature today.

Mr. Guérard plans to offer a companion volume, *The Doctrine of Art for Art's Sake*. He need not fear to discharge more frequently salvos of his heavier artillery.

E. C. KNOWLTON.

#### PLEA FOR SOCIAL VISION

THE NEW SOCIAL ORDER IN AMERICA. By Guy V. Price. Kansas City, Mo.: Brown-White Co., 1935. Pp. 241. \$2.25.

This volume, dedicated to Charles E. Merriam and Charles A. Ellwood, holds with these leaders of American political and social thought that if social science is to be useful for social guidance it must not be concerned only with more adequate factual information concerning existing conditions. It must also provide a body of valid and consistent "social values which will form a firm and agreed basis of social relations. We may thereby enhance the place of reason and creative thought and science in evolution and diminish the rôle of violence and revolutionary anarchy." Democracies, it is true, "need facts and ever more facts. But social intelligence comprehends more than facts. And if changes intervene rapidly the facts are soon rendered innocuous and men must rely on their conception of what is desirable regardless of what has been." In such circumstances, scientific knowledge, applied to the elaboration of techniques, but ignoring the criticism of ends, is more likely to hasten disaster than to avert it. Conscious control of the social process in the interest of human welfare is retarded less by the backward state of the social sciences than by the lack of social vision in applying the scientific knowledge now available in the attainment of social ends.

This point of view is applied in successive chapters to liberalism,

social cleavage and unbalance, the emergence of social planning, the city, international relations, education, democracy, and the new American government. The topics are timely and the treatment stimulating, but the attempt to cover so wide a field in so brief a survey must necessarily at times leave much to be desired in the way of the elaboration and clarification of ideas. It is hoped that the author will have an opportunity for more comprehensive treatment in a forthcoming revision already announced, and that the publishers will correct an unusually incompetent job of proof-reading.

HOWARD E. JENSEN.

#### PRASEWORTHY ACHIEVEMENT

THE MONEY SUPPLY OF THE AMERICAN COLONIES BEFORE 1720. By Curtis Putnam Nettels. (University of Wisconsin Studies in the Social Sciences and History, No. 20.) Madison, Wisconsin, 1934. Pp. 300. \$2.00.

As an instance of that rare event when a scholar's researches actually portray to the mind's eye a real, if distant, past, this unpretentious monograph is an admirable example. To invest with actuality the commercial aspects of the relations between England and her American colonies and between the colonies themselves, dealing with shillings, pieces of eight, commodity currency, inflation of coin and paper money, balances of payments, the relation of money to trade and manufacturing, debtor and creditor, insurance, freights, commissions and interest, is a praiseworthy achievement. The author is equipped for the task by an exhaustive study of the manuscript and other sources, a thorough understanding of the intricacies of the subject, and a simple and direct style, with just the proper amount of reiteration.

The great problem of the colonies was to secure the necessary returns to pay for British goods. Their natural situation both precluded any extensive manufactures and enhanced the need for British manufactures. This meant that agricultural communities were dependent upon a manufacturing nation. The prices to be paid for English goods seemed to depend on the colonial demand rather than ability to pay. To the natural eagerness of the British merchant for large profits were added the invisible items of insurance, freights, and commissions, which in nearly all instances went to English merchants and shippers. At the same time overproduction, scarcity of money, and the enhancement of prices for British goods, brought a decline in the value of American products. So that even with increased production the colonist found his buying power decreasing; he was buying in a dear market and selling in a cheap one.

The adverse balance of trade meant the exportation of American products without an adequate return and also the depletion of the limited supply of specie money in the colonies.

Under the prevailing mercantile theory, this was a situation which England sought to continue. The colonies, on the other hand, were bound to break this dependence on England. Their attempts to do this, and Britain's efforts to prevent such a result, leave no doubt as to the seeming disparity of the interests of the two. To increase the supply of money, enhance the value of their products, and thus to provide returns for England, the colonies undertook several monetary experiments: prevention of the export of specie, arbitrarily increasing the price of silver by legislative enactment (which was intended to keep specie in America, as well as to attract it from abroad and to encourage the bringing in of gold and silver by pirates—it had the effect also of decreasing the Crown revenue from America), the minting of colonial money, the fixing of the prices of commodity currency to the colonial advantage, and the use of paper money, especially after 1715. Curiously enough, the increased use of paper money had the effect of doing what the colonists had been trying to prevent: driving the specie abroad.

To all these devices England was opposed. Their inflationary tendencies would scale down the debt due English creditors. But worse was that fact that an adequate supply of money (which was really not necessary in exchanging colonial produce for British goods!) would make possible the diversification of economic activities to the extent that the colonies would become competitors rather than customers. Most of the laws setting up these monetary experiments were therefore disallowed. The fact that Massachusetts lost her charter was partly due to her daring practice of minting money. And England did not allow money to go to America to meet the Crown expenses.

The author takes exception to the emphasis which the older historians have put upon the colonies as sources of supplies, rather than markets, until about 1745. Professor Nettels thinks it was the other way round. The Southern colonies were valued above New England not because they produced more useful commodities (better naval stores could be procured elsewhere), but because their supply of staples provided more ample returns in exchange for English goods, thus affording a better market. The New England colonies not only did not have returns in staples but this inability to buy from England led to the development of their own local industries. Then England found that she was being deprived of markets in the Southern colonies and West

Indies and Southern Europe by the Northern colonies. In order to get returns, New England was becoming too much like old England. As New England entered into keener competition with Britain, the rise of the slave trade in the Southern colonies (which meant increased British markets in Africa as well as in America) made them increasingly valuable. And if the Southern colonies sent England more produce than she could consume, the surplus was exported, and served to give her a favorable balance of trade in the world markets.

Professor Nettels has produced a valuable study, much broader in scope than its title indicates. It is not without interest to the student of current affairs.

R. H. WOODY.

#### A SAGA OF COFFEE

*COFFEE: The Epic of a Commodity.* By Heinrich Edouard Jacob. Translated by Eden and Cedar Paul. New York: The Viking Press, 1935. Pp. xiii, 296. \$3.50.

The story of the introduction and widespread use of coffee in the western world and of the extensive production of and trade in the commodity thereby entailed is decidedly worth the telling and has something of the quality of an epic. Herr Jacob has an eye for the picturesque and a tendency to philosophize on slight provocation. He has some knowledge of coffee-houses in Vienna. Apparently while in Brazil he was impressed when he witnessed the wholesale destruction of coffee in an effort to stabilize the price at a profitable level and was moved to reflect on the millions who longed for a cheering cup beyond their reach. As a setting for these facts he has gathered legends and mingled them with his own fancies to the length of a substantial volume without answering many of the questions that the curious would ask and with a minimum of the information that a reader expects to find.

W. T. LAPRADE.

#### A LIVELY LADY

*THE LADY OF BLEEDING HEART YARD: Lady Elisabeth Hatton, 1578-1646.* By Laura Norworthy. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1936. Pp. xx, 292. \$3.00.

Though written with a manifest will to exploit human incidents and with an unconcealed sympathy for Lady Hatton and her daughter, this book is a serious attempt to gather facts and marshal them to do belated justice to characters that have suffered somewhat in history because associated with great figures in their time. Lady Hatton was



a granddaughter of Lord Burghley, Elizabeth's great minister, and had for her first husband, with whom she enjoyed a respite of domestic happiness, Sir William Newport, nephew of Sir Christopher Hatton, the same Queen's Lord Chancellor. Rich in her own right and by marriage, she was sought as a second spouse by Sir Edward Coke, whose character has a luster in history it lacked around his fireside. Something of a spitfire herself, though the Lady bore her second husband a daughter, she refused to bear his name and became involved in his rivalry with the famous Lord Chancellor, Francis Bacon. Later her daughter was married against her will to a brother of the royal favorite, the Duke of Buckingham, whence arose further contentions to fill the story of two disappointed lives with incidents not uninteresting to readers who will learn also something of the English ruling class in the reigns of James I and his son.

W. T. LAPRADE.

#### HANOVERIANS AS SEEN BY A JACOBITE

THE FOUR GEORGES. By Sir Charles Petrie. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1936. Pp. ix, 321. \$3.75.

Sir Charles Petrie is a belated Jacobite. His studies of the Stuart Pretenders have a substance largely absent from this volume. Apart from the pages allotted to the Jacobite rebellions there is neither information nor insight enough to merit the attention of a serious reader. The sympathies of the author inspire in him a distaste for the Hanoverians and for statesmen who flourished in their times which inhibits an understanding of either their abilities or of the problems with which they had to deal.

W. T. LAPRADE.

#### PEPYS IN MIDDLE AGE

SAMUEL PEPYS: *The Years of Peril*. By Arthur Bryant. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1935. Pp. xv, 466. \$3.50.

The second volume of Mr. Bryant's interesting biography of Pepys treats of the years from 1669 to 1683, the most important period in his life for a student of history. In these years by indefatigable exertion he almost achieved the impossible as an administrator of the royal navy. But his dependence on the favor of the Duke of York and association with that Prince, which earlier afforded an opportunity to do this work, later sent him to prison as an object of suspicion and deprived the country of his services at a time when they were greatly needed.

The story of the industrious naval administrator lacks some of the human appeal of the diarist who noted in shorthand intimate youthful emotions and escapades, memory of which otherwise might have passed with mounting age. But Mr. Bryant carries forward his narrative with the same care and felicity that made his first volume a delight to readers. Doubtless it was inevitable that a biographer of Charles II, now immersed in the difficulties of Pepys, should have more sympathy with the subjects of his study than with those who capitalized the Popish Plot and promoted the Exclusion Bill.

W. T. LAPRADE.

### PANORAMIC VIEW OF ENGLISH LITERATURE

THE VOICE OF ENGLAND. By Charles Grosvenor Osgood. New York and London: Harper and Brothers, 1936. Pp. xiii, 627. \$3.00.

Professor Osgood, long an apostle of good English, has given us a complete panoramic view of English literature from the seventh century to the present day and done it gracefully and delightfully. It is a pleasure to read these inspired pages pervaded by the charm and personality of the author as well as by a deep and sympathetic knowledge of the subject.

This book is not a mere cataloging of facts, nor is it a list of authors, but a thrilling pageant in which are presented the creators of literature—men and women—not only in their experience and personal qualities, but in the artistic and critical evaluation of their works as well.

R. O. RIVERA.

### MILITARY STRATEGIST

STONEWALL JACKSON. By Col. C. R. F. Henderson, C. B. New York and London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1936. Pp. xxiv, 737. \$5.00.

This important work which was first issued in two volumes in August, 1898, comes to us now, after fourteen printings, in England and America, in a convenient one-volume edition.

Since it portrays the life and tactics of one of the world's most remarkable military strategists in a simple, able way, this book has stood the tests of the British War College and of the United States Military Academy. It continues to be the standard life of Stonewall Jackson.

R. O. RIVERA.

